Venus™

For People of African Descent in the Life
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STEP INTO THE COMFORT ZONE

By Quohnos Mitchell

PLUS!

Celebrity Close-Ups

Tyra Banks
Eric Benet
Sheryl Lee Ralph
and
Debra Cox

Cruzan in St. Croix

by Rosiland Lloyd

Mary & Lou

fiction by Shirlene Holmes

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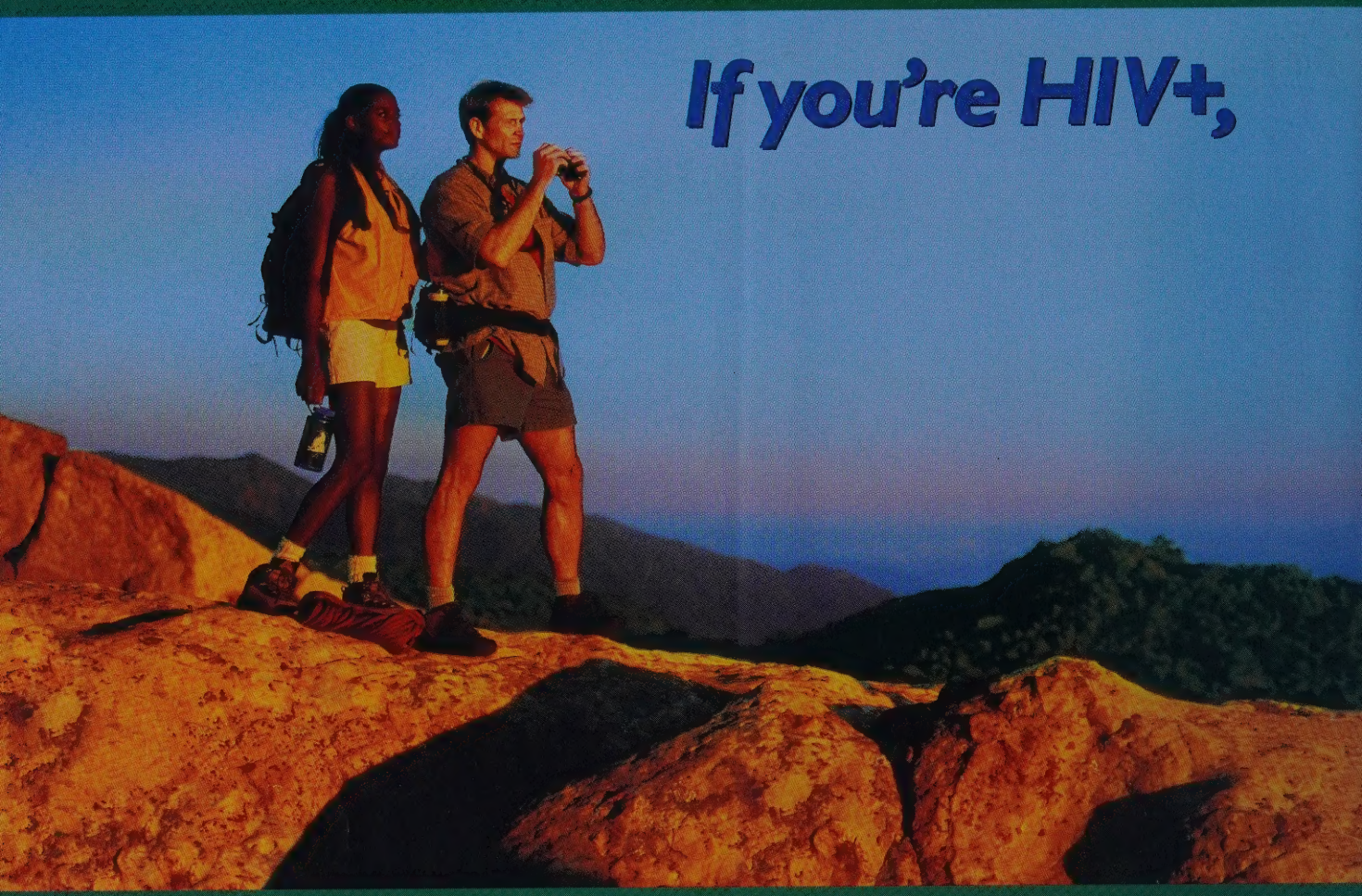


Being HIV+ isn't easy.

It's a daily challenge that can take all you've got. It helps to have an advantage – to lighten your load and keep you going. Federal healthcare guidelines now call for including a potent protease inhibitor as part of combination treatments to fight HIV. Consider these reasons to make the protease inhibitor CRIXIVAN the foundation of your treatment regimen.

CRIXIVAN is a protease inhibitor that fights HIV. CRIXIVAN can help reduce the chance of illnesses and death associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 (T) cell count. Some patients may not experience these effects. CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS.

New NIH research showed people taking CRIXIVAN in triple therapy lived longer and experienced fewer opportunistic infections.

Recent year-long research conducted by the National Institutes of Health (Protocol ACTG 320) studied over 1,000 patients and confirmed results from another study.

The group of patients receiving CRIXIVAN along with 3TC and AZT achieved a reduction in deaths and AIDS-defining illnesses over those taking 3TC and AZT alone. This reduction was significant enough for the NIH to recommend the study be stopped, so that all participants could benefit from the findings. Because the study was ended early, there was insufficient data to determine the statistical impact of CRIXIVAN on survival.

CRIXIVAN in triple therapy continues to hold serum viral load down below the limit of detection at the one year mark.

In a separate, ongoing landmark study, over 90% of the 31 patients receiving CRIXIVAN, AZT, and 3TC reduced their HIV serum viral load below the limit of detection after 24 weeks (as measured by available tests; the virus may still be present in other organ systems).

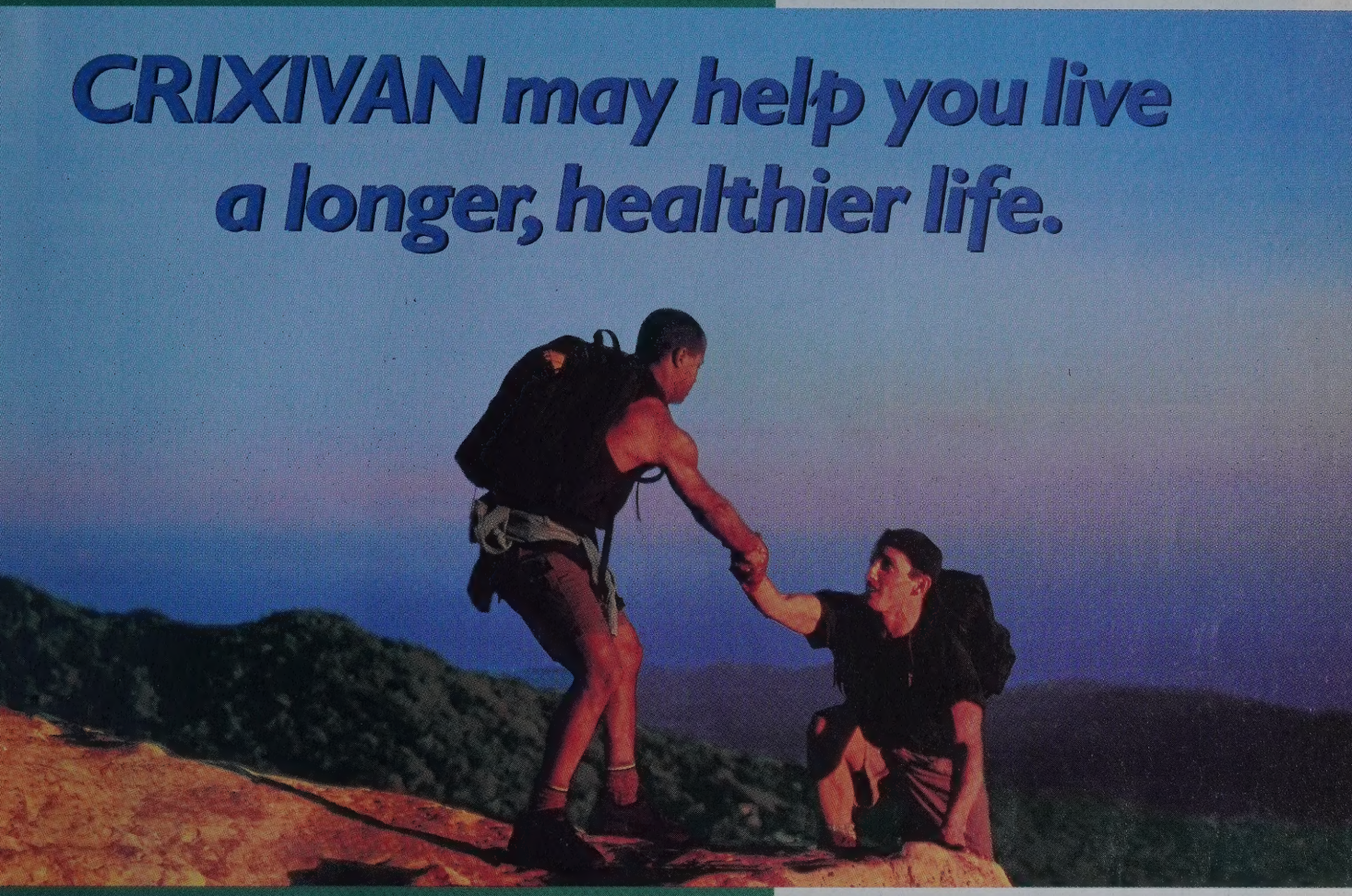
Importantly, the limited number of patients who chose to stay with the study for longer periods of time maintained these results through the one year mark.

CRIXIVAN is generally well tolerated.

CRIXIVAN can be taken with a light meal or on an empty stomach. There are side effects associated with protease inhibitors in general and CRIXIVAN in particular. Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN may develop kidney stones. For some, this can lead to more severe kidney problems including kidney failure. Drinking at least 6 glasses of water each day may help reduce the chance of forming a kidney stone. Other side effects reported include rapid breakdown of red blood cells and liver problems. There are some common medications and AIDS-related medications you should not take with CRIXIVAN. Discuss all medications you are taking or plan to take with your doctor.

As with other protease inhibitors, increased bleeding in some patients with hemophilia and increased blood sugar levels or diabetes have been reported. Please read the following page for detailed information on side effects and dosing.

CRIXIVAN may help you live a longer, healthier life.



CRIXIVAN is the number one choice of doctors.*

CRIXIVAN is prescribed for more patients than any other protease inhibitor. With this commitment to CRIXIVAN comes a commitment to product improvements and further research in the battle against HIV. CRIXIVAN is being studied in a broad range of patients and in many different combinations. Ask your doctor for the latest news and developments.

* IMS America; 3/96 - 7/98.

Focus on the rest of your life.

Learn all you can about HIV therapy. Talk with your doctor. Stay informed and stay the course. With viral load below the limit of detection and an increase in CD4 T-cells, it's easier to look forward to the future with confidence.

Please read the following page for more detailed information about CRIXIVAN.

Remember to ask your doctor about CRIXIVAN.

CRIXIVAN®
(indinavir sulfate)
Capsules

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Going the distance.

CRIXIVAN®
(indinavir sulfate)
Capsules

Patient Information about CRIXIVAN* (KRIK-sih-van)

for HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) Infection
Generic name: indinavir (in-DIH-nuh-veer) sulfate

Please read this information before you start taking CRIXIVAN. Also, you should read the information included with CRIXIVAN each time you receive your prescription, just in case anything has changed. Remember, this information does not take the place of careful discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss CRIXIVAN when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when using CRIXIVAN and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

What is CRIXIVAN?

CRIXIVAN is an oral capsule used for the treatment of HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus). HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). CRIXIVAN is a type of HIV drug called a protease (PRO-tee-ase) inhibitor.

How does CRIXIVAN work?

CRIXIVAN is a protease inhibitor that fights HIV. CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 (T) cell count. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

CRIXIVAN is usually prescribed with other anti-HIV drugs such as ZDV (also called AZT), 3TC, ddI, ddC, or d4T. CRIXIVAN works differently from these other anti-HIV drugs. Talk with your doctor about how you should take CRIXIVAN.

CRIXIVAN has been studied in adults. The safety and effectiveness of CRIXIVAN in children and adolescents have not been established.

How should I take CRIXIVAN?

There are six important things you must do to help you benefit from CRIXIVAN:

1. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every day as prescribed by your doctor.** Continue taking CRIXIVAN unless your doctor tells you to stop. Take the exact amount of CRIXIVAN that your doctor tells you to take, right from the very start. To help make sure you will benefit from CRIXIVAN, you must not skip doses or take "drug holidays." If you don't take CRIXIVAN as prescribed, the activity of CRIXIVAN may be reduced (due to resistance).
2. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every 8 hours around the clock, *every day*.** It may be easier to remember to take CRIXIVAN if you take it at the same time every day. If you have questions about when to take CRIXIVAN, your doctor or health care provider can help you decide what schedule works for you.
3. **If you miss a dose by more than 2 hours, wait and then take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time.** However, if you miss a dose by less than 2 hours, take your missed dose immediately. Then take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. Do not take more or less than your prescribed dose of CRIXIVAN at any one time.
4. **Take CRIXIVAN with water.** You can also take CRIXIVAN with other beverages such as skim or non-fat milk, juice, coffee, or tea.
5. **Ideally, take each dose of CRIXIVAN without food but with water at least one hour before or two hours after a meal.** Or you can take CRIXIVAN with a light meal. Examples of light meals include:
   - dry toast with jelly, juice, and coffee (with skim or non-fat milk and sugar if you want)
   - corn flakes with skim or non-fat milk and sugar

   Do not take CRIXIVAN at the same time as any meals that are high in calories, fat, and protein (for example — a bacon and egg breakfast). When taken at the same time as CRIXIVAN, these foods can interfere with CRIXIVAN being absorbed into your bloodstream and may lessen its effect.
6. **It is critical that you drink at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquid (preferably water) throughout the day, every day. CRIXIVAN can cause kidney stones.** Having enough fluids in your body should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

Does CRIXIVAN cure HIV or AIDS?

CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking CRIXIVAN may still develop infections or other conditions associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important for you to remain under the care of a doctor. Although CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS, CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses, including death, associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

Does CRIXIVAN reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

CRIXIVAN has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

Who should not take CRIXIVAN?

Do not take CRIXIVAN if you have had a serious allergic reaction to CRIXIVAN or any of its components.

What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor?

Talk to your doctor if:

- You are pregnant or if you become pregnant while you are taking CRIXIVAN. We do not yet know how CRIXIVAN affects pregnant women or their developing babies.
- You are breast-feeding. You should stop breast-feeding if you are taking CRIXIVAN.

Also talk to your doctor if you have:

- Problems with your liver, especially if you have mild or moderate liver disease caused by cirrhosis.
- Problems with your kidneys.
- Diabetes
- Hemophilia

Tell your doctor about any medicines you are taking or plan to take, including non-prescription medicines.

Can CRIXIVAN be taken with other medications?**

Drugs you should not take with CRIXIVAN:

SELDANE® (terfenadine)	HISMANAL® (astemizole)
VERSED® (midazolam)	HALCION® (triazolam)
PROPULSID® (cisapride)	Ergot medications (e.g., Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

Taking CRIXIVAN with the above medications could result in serious or life-threatening problems (such as irregular heartbeat or excessive sleepiness).

In addition, you should not take CRIXIVAN with rifampin, known as RIFADIN®, RIFAMATE®, RIFATER®, or RIMACTANE®.

Drugs you can take with CRIXIVAN include:

RETROVIR® (zidovudine, ZDV also called AZT)	BIAXIN® (clarithromycin)
TAGAMET® (cimetidine)	isoniazid (INH)
DIFLUCAN® (fluconazole)	ORTHO-NOVUM 1/35® (oral contraceptive)
EPIVIR™ (lamivudine, 3TC)	ZERIT® (stavudine, d4T)
BACTRIM®/SEPTRA® (trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole)	

VIDEX® (didanosine, ddI) — If you take CRIXIVAN with VIDEX®, take them at least one hour apart.

MYCOBUTIN® (rifabutin) — If you take CRIXIVAN with MYCOBUTIN®, your doctor may adjust both the dose of MYCOBUTIN and the dose of CRIXVAN.

NIZORAL® (ketoconazole) — If you take CRIXIVAN with NIZORAL®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

Talk to your doctor about any medications you are taking.

What are the possible side effects of CRIXIVAN?

Like all prescription drugs, CRIXIVAN can cause side effects. The following is **not** a complete list of side effects reported with CRIXIVAN when taken either alone or with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this page alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN developed kidney stones. In some of these patients this led to more severe kidney problems, including kidney failure or inflammation of the kidneys. Drinking at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquid (preferably water) each day should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had rapid breakdown of red blood cells (hemolytic anemia) which in some cases was severe or resulted in death.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had liver problems including liver failure and death. Some patients had other illnesses or were taking other drugs. It is uncertain if CRIXIVAN caused these liver problems.

Diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) have occurred in patients taking protease inhibitors. In some of these patients, this led to ketoacidosis, a serious condition caused by poorly controlled blood sugar. Some patients had diabetes before starting protease inhibitors, others did not. Some patients required adjustments to their diabetes medication. Others needed new diabetes medication.

In some patients with hemophilia, increased bleeding has been reported.

Clinical Studies

Increases in bilirubin (one laboratory test of liver function) have been reported in approximately 10% of patients. Usually, this finding has not been associated with liver problems. However, on rare occasions, a person may develop yellowing of the skin and/or eyes.

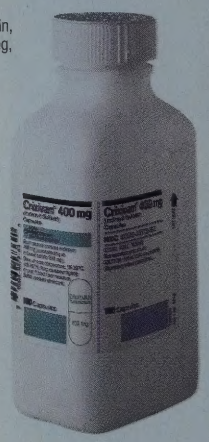
Side effects occurring in 2% or more of patients included: abdominal pain, fatigue or weakness, flank pain, feeling unwell, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, acid regurgitation, loss of appetite, dry mouth, back pain, headache, trouble sleeping, dizziness, taste changes, rash, upper respiratory infection, dry skin, and sore throat.

Swollen kidneys due to blocked urine flow occurred rarely.

Marketing Experience

Other side effects reported since CRIXIVAN has been marketed include: abdominal swelling; inflammation of the kidneys; increased fat appearing in areas such as the neck, abdomen, and back; change in skin color; severe skin reactions; hair loss; crystals in the urine; and allergic reactions.

Tell your doctor promptly about these or any other unusual symptoms. If the condition persists or worsens, seek medical attention.



How should I store CRIXIVAN capsules?

- Keep CRIXIVAN capsules in the bottle they came in and at room temperature (59°F-86°F).
- Keep CRIXIVAN capsules dry by leaving the small desiccant "pillow" in the bottle. Keep the bottle closed.

This medication is prescribed for a particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep CRIXIVAN and all medicines out of the reach of children. If you suspect that more than the prescribed dose of this medicine has been taken, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

This provides a summary of information about CRIXIVAN. If you have any questions or concerns about either CRIXIVAN or HIV, talk to your doctor.

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CRIXIVAN®
(indinavir sulfate)
Capsules

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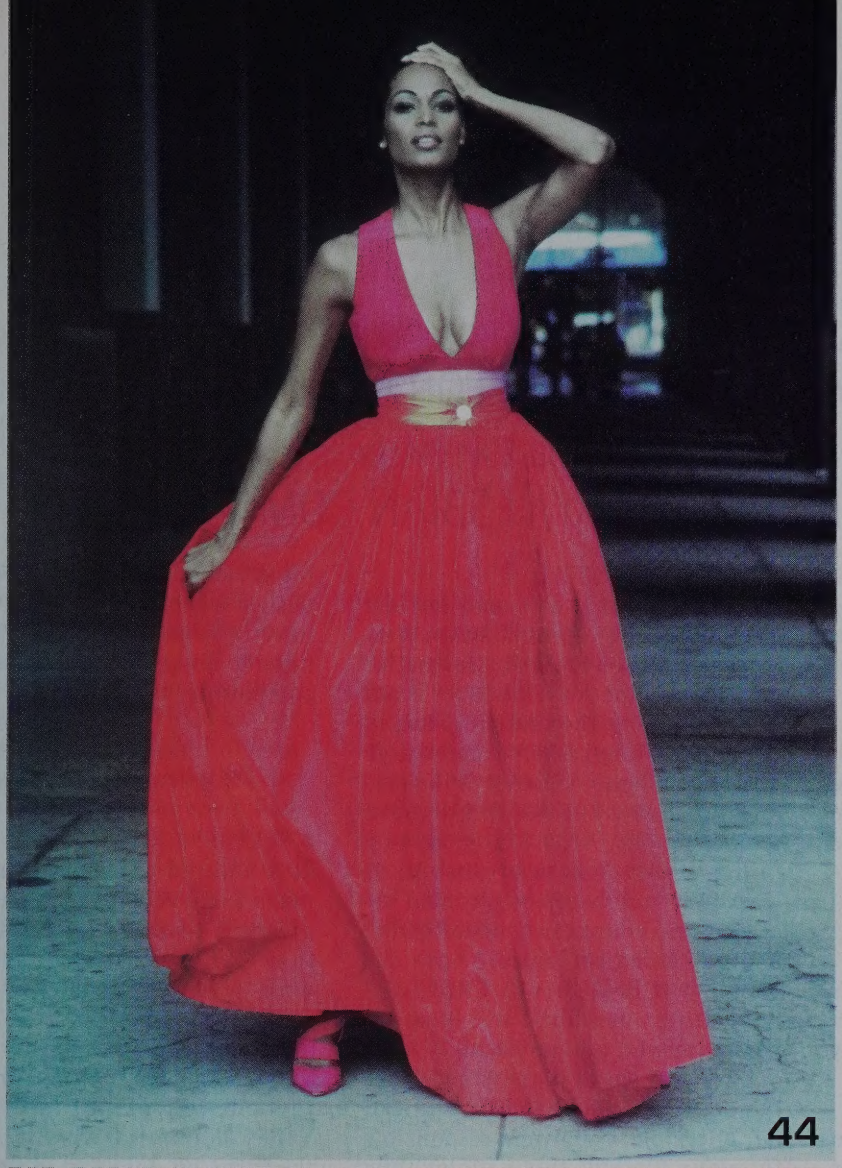

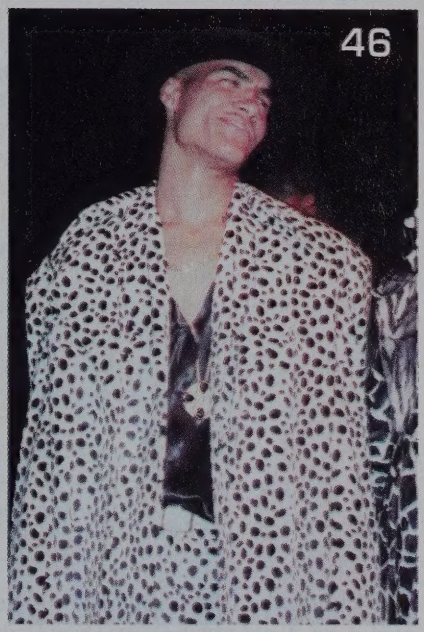

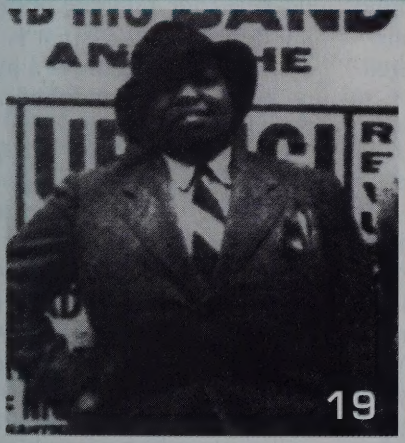

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"I FROZE IN MY SEAT AS I READ THE ISSUE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. GOD ANSWERED A PRAYER FOR ME. UP UNTIL THAT DAY, I'D NEVER HEARD ANYONE DISCUSS THE ISSUE, ESPECIALLY IN THE BLACK GAY/LESBIAN COMMUNITY."

GREAT EXPERIENCE

I have been reading your magazine for the past year and it has really been a great experience. Your articles are most informative and I love the "Out and About" section. Venus is like a black "In the Life" Vanity Fair (smile).

I would like to see features on more people in the arts, like George C. Wolfe and many others who are gay and have a high profile. They are great role models of the fact that you can be successful and still remain true to yourself.

Keep up the good work!

James K. Mathis
Conservatory of Black Theater
New York City

NO FLUFF

I picked up the fifth anniversary issue [Vol. 4 No. 4] at Church Of the Open Door and wanted to congratulate you and your contributors for a fine publication.

It's great to see a national, glossy, well-designed magazine that's not full of fluff pieces. I especially appreciated Ulester Douglas' article on domestic violence. It really spotlighted the need for the creation of agencies and support networks within our communities in order to address the unique experiences of brothas and sistas in the life. Don Charles in "Brothatalk" took the words right out of my mouth. While the criticism of Bill Clinton by hypocritical Republicans turns my stomach, it is difficult for me to have sympathy for a man who has abandoned Black and lesbigaytrans Americans when it became politically expedient to do so.

Thank you very much for the Healthy Living Pocket Guide. The info and resources are great. Continued blessings.

Otis Richardson
Chicago, IL

A PRAYER ANSWERED

I froze in my seat as I read the last issue [Vol.4, No. 4] on domestic violence. God had answered a prayer for me. Up until that day, I'd never heard anyone discuss the issue (especially in the Black Gay/Lesbian community). You see, domestic violence is the major reason why I've decided to move to another city. After four years in a rather ambiguous relationship, at least four incidences of physical violence, and countless bouts of verbal and psychological abuse, I have declared that ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!! I'm getting out while I still have my health (mental and physical).

I just wanted to thank you for being obedient to God and the spirit of our ancestors. They were responsible for your placing this article; they knew that I needed further confirmation. I can go on, now--empowered and encouraged.

Anonymous

CAUGHT MY EYE

What really caught my eye was your article on BLACK GAYS IN CORPORATE AMERICA, [Vol.4, No.3,1998]. This topic should be discussed throughout EVERY company in America, as there are GAYS and LESBIANS in every field, trade, and industry.

I will spread the GOSPEL of Venus to others. Keep up the GREAT WORK!!

Michael Wilson
Raleigh, NC

SUCCESS STORIES

I really enjoyed the Corporate issue of Venus. One article that especially touched me was "A Black Dyke, Empowered"[Vol.4 No.3, 1998]. Thank you for including "success stories" of lesbian and gay people at work, and the great things that can be accomplished when we live in truth and believe in what we're doing. You continue to do such quality work for the community–thank you.

Gina Bowers
Communications Coordinator
Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center

A PLEASURE!

Just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed your Special 5th Anniversary issue. The rejuvenation section was a pleasure; the interview with Jewelle Gomez was inspirational; the James Baldwin page was a blast of clarity; Don Charles' essay on Bill Clinton was timely and thought provoking; the tribute to Venus Landin was very moving and the focus on domestic violence a reminder of the work that is left to be done. The magazine is a pleasure to look at and even more of a pleasure to read. Don't stop!

Pearl Cleage
Author, Playwright
Atlanta, GA

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

I walked past the bookstore and remembered I wanted to check out that gay magazine I'd saw once before a long time ago named Venus. I convinced my partner to come inside with me for just a minute while I checked it out.

As I walked over to it I couldn't shake the feeling that I knew that womyn on the cover. I kept telling myself it was stress and a overactive imagination.

How in the world would I out here in Seattle know the womyn on the cover of a magazine based in

New York. Right? But I kept looking anyway. I finally picked it up and stared at it and the name on the cover. It took a minute for the shock to settle but I knew that was Liki. [Venus Landin's childhood nick name] My neighbor. She lived across the street from me when we were both in high school in a little town in Michigan. I remembered that she had had a son and then my head started to swim as I remembered hearing she had been killed by her lover. I just stood there holding the magazine remembering all the good times we'd had together. She turned me on to Saturday Night Live and the Rocky Horror Picture Show. We used to sit on her porch in the summer and talk about music and hang out with her honey. All I kept remembering is how much I wish she was here now ...how I never got a chance to hang out with her when I was fully grown and tell her about all the things I'd learned about myself and the world and how she woulda told me something funny, and poignant all at the same time if I'd had that chance. I really miss her. After I left and went to college we lost touch; bumped into each other occasionally but not nearly enough looking back. Life can be so short and you don't even think about it until somebody you know is gone.

I didn't think it was strange that a magazine has been named in her memory.

She was rare and special. If one got a chance to know her you surely couldn't forget her. I wondered out of all the homophobic rants I heard back home about her life and death if anyone there knew or cared that she had a magazine named after her. And if it mattered enough for them to drop their fear and see her as she lived-vibrant, unafraid to make some tough choices and keep on stepping. Then I thought well I have a chance to remember her that way and I will. Thanks for the memories and putting one of my old friends on the cover and keeping her memory alive through your magazine.

Meri Tahset
Seattle, WA

APPLAUSE

I first want to say how much I thoroughly enjoy your publication. It's been a while since I have seen a decent magazine that deals with our issues as a same gender loving community and with pertinent information that is useful for now or later. Applause is surely due for stepping out on faith and creating such a wonderful magazine.

Carlos V. Edwards
Cincinnati, OH

WAKE UP CALL

Having recently received my first issue, I have to say that I was very pleased with it! I applaud Ulester Douglass for his article on domestic violence in our community. It saddens me, that a beautiful sister, was killed, due to this plight.

Someone close to me, was in an abusive relationship for ten years.

She refuses to "label" it so, despite the fact that her ex-lover has menaced her with a machete, on more than one occasion. Her rationale, which is irrational, is that she is/was physically bigger and knew that "I could take her if need be." My friend is a passive butch.

Senseless, yes! What is even more senseless is that we, as a community have not created a powerful support system, where help can be readily accessible. This is clearly reflected in Cleo Manago's article about the black community caring about ourselves.

Continue to be what you are: Venus-a much needed voice, a wake up call, a resource for us!

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Venus™

FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT IN THE LIFE

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He opened your eyes
with *Invisible Life*...
He rocked your world
with *Just As I Am*...

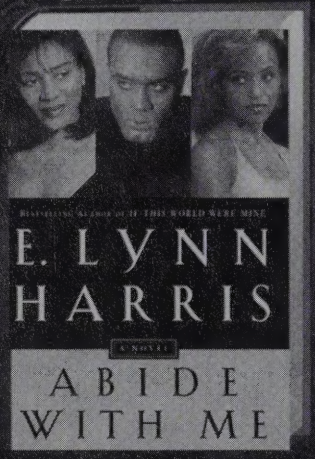
Now, *New York Times*
bestselling author

E. Lynn Harris

will ignite your soul
with his new novel

Abide with Me

Matthew Jordan Smith



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contributors

Shirlene Holmes, a Queens, NY native, is a nationally known playwright educator, and scholar, who is based in Atlanta, where she is an Associate Professor at Georgia State University. Her plays have been produced locally, nationally and internationally. Dr. Holmes is the 1997 recipient of the Nancy Dean Distinguished Playwriting Award, has plays and articles published in anthologies and magazines.

Kimberly "Q" Purnell, or "Q" as she is so affectionately called is a mover and shaker. Kimberly is an actress, writer, producer, singer, dancer, who recently won the 1998 Audelco Award for "Best Supporting Actress" and is currently working at producing her one-woman show, "The "Q" stands for Queer!" She is constantly experimenting and taking on challenging roles and responsibilities in her life and looks to continue to grow and learn. Motto: Always remember your past, because it is the key to your future!

Quohnos Mitchell is a freelance writer and publicist living in New York City. In addition to writing for Venus, his work has appeared in several national magazines including Vibe and Entertainment Weekly. His public relations firm currently handles publicity for BadBoy Entertainment. In this issue Quohnos takes us inside the 'Comfort Zone', a Harlem 'speak-easy' frequented by black gay men who have grown tired of the bars.

Regina M. Knotts, a native of Newark, Delaware, currently manages an interviewing site for a marketing research firm. She is an aspiring sociologist who is preparing for a return to graduate school. Her poignant essay explores the effects of homophobia in sacred black communal environments like The Beauty Shop.

Lessons in Living

My favorite Sunday school teacher, Mrs. Mason, from my old neighborhood recently visited our home with her husband, a deacon at the church where I grew up. She was accompanied by my dearest Mother Jackson and Miss Fannie both of at least 80 years. Aunt Liz, my grandmothers best friend, was accompanied by her two sons and was joined by a third son who lives here in New York. My life partner, Marian and I had invited them all to help us celebrate the 80th birthday of Mrs. Ollie Hall, my grandmother.

Naturally, we were thrilled when they accepted our invitation to make the trip from Trenton to New York City, about a 2 hour drive. Marian and I were a bit nervous but not really. We were more worried about the variety of our menu than anything else. We hadn't given one thought to tucking away the happy snap shot of us standing cheek to cheek which sits atop our piano or the dozens of books on the library shelves which include a display of gay literature or the copies of *Venus*, among other magazines, in the family room.

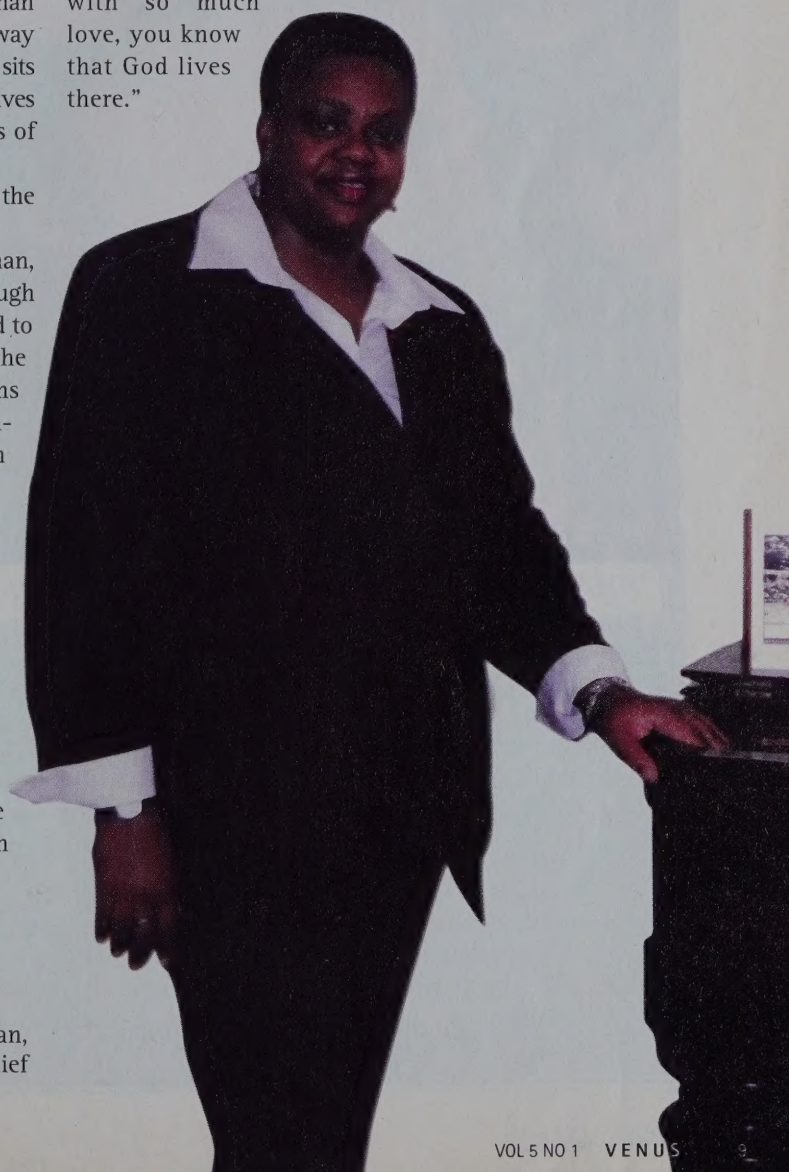
We wanted to present ourselves as we live everyday, the three of us, as a family.

Mrs. Mason, an articulate, warm and intelligent woman, has always been quite a progressive thinker. And although I had come out to her a couple of years ago, it was hard to predict how the afternoon would unfold. We broke the ice by passing around my mother's old photo albums which immediately jump-started memories and laughter. We later moved to the dinner table where Marian had prepared the 'Last' supper. As we held hands, I thought about asking Deacon Mason to offer the family prayer, but I decided to pray myself. Something in me needed to let them know that I am still in touch with heaven and most importantly, that heaven is still in touch with me!

By the end of the evening everyone was linked arm and arm, swaying to the music of Ella Fitzgerald as my nephew, Nathaniel, snapped birthday pictures and my grandmother, dance with her great grandson, Eric. What a wonderful afternoon it turned out to be. We had all experienced a new life lesson. For us, the lesson was that our people are ready to accept us, without sermons and lectures, just as we are, when we present ourselves with pride and dignity.

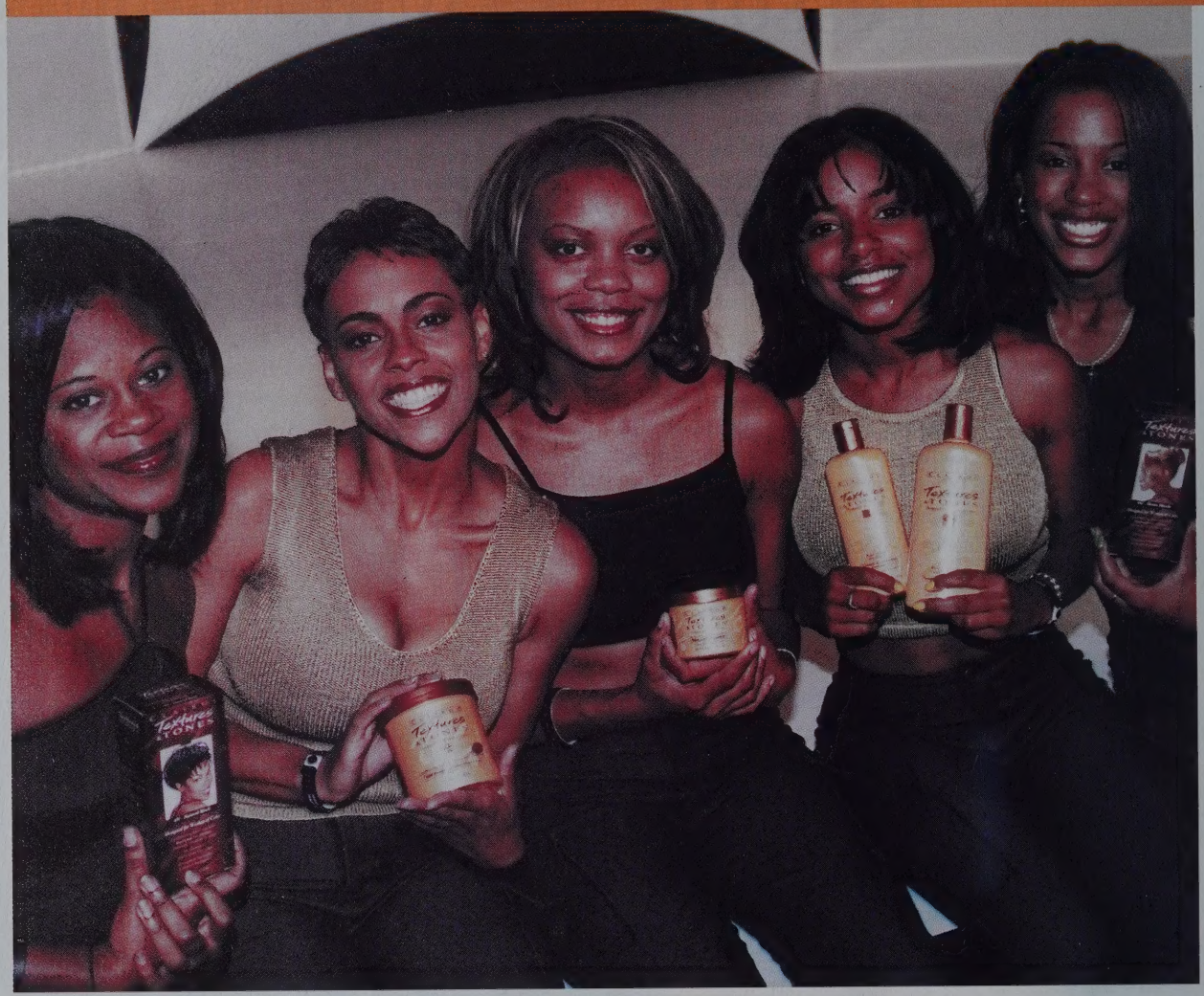
The lesson for them is that love makes a house a home, no matter who is living there.

The most dynamic part of this story is that this visit helped to move one Black church a little closer to accepting all it's family members and a little farther from it's history of homophobia. I'm told that Mrs. Mason, Deacon Mason and Mother Jackson all testified the following Sunday, one after the other, about what a fabulous time they had, and how "their home is filled with so much love, you know that God lives there."



Charlene Cothran,
Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

Only Your Hairdresser Knows How



Poetic Healing

An anthology of poetry is being compiled of Lesbians of Color mainly about abuse, breast cancer, chemical dependency, lesbian phobia, racism, sexism and other life challenges that have healed you, others or promotes healing. Send a miximum of 3 original and unpublished poems to:

Chinwe Odeluga
1941 Gaston Place DR, #328
Autsin, TX 78723
or email: codebuga66@hotmail.com

Beauty and Health Work Together

Clairol, Inc., through its support of the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation is helping reduce breast cancer mortality rates among African-American women by working with the University of California at San Diego cancer Center (UCSD) to promote and support the Black Beauticians Health Promotion Program. This program recruits and trains beauticians to educate their clients on the importance of breast cancer screening and other healthy lifestyle choices.

Although the incidence of breast cancer is higher among Caucasian women than African-American women, the mortality rate among African American women is higher. Black beauticians were selected as focal point in reaching this high-risk population because discussions of a personal nature are commonplace inthe beauty salon. Within this community in particular, the relationship between client and stylist is strong and it is based on implicit trust and faith. Women spend a considerable amount of time at the beauty salon throughout the year and once a relationship is established, patrons rarely change beauticians.

The Black Beauticians Health Promotion Program was based on a pilot study conducted by the UCSD Cancer Center to determine whether beauticians can serve as health educators for information of special concern to their clients and whether they are able to motivate their clients to adopt health-promoting behaviors. The Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation funded the expansion of this pilot program to a statistically significant study to be conducted over three years, (1997-2000). The study will provide answers about a new model of providing health information to women that can be replicated nationally.

Currently, 20 hair salons are participating in the program.

To maximize the beautician's power of persuasion and influence, the program relies upon the proven art of ancestral storytelling. Ms. Alyce Smith Cooper, a renowned storyteller, works with the beauticians to refine their art of storytelling and witnessing, both of which are recognized as an effective means of conveying social mores and values within the African-American community.

"It was conceivable that by conveying key information through the familiar methods of storytelling and witnessing, black women could become motivated to follow annual breast-cancer screening guidelines," said Georgia Robins Sadler, Ph.D., Associate Director for Outreach at UCSD Cancer Center.

ALTHOUGH THE INCIDENCE OF BREAST CANCER IS HIGHER AMONG CAUCASIAN WOMEN THAN AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN, THE MORTALITY RATE AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IS HIGHER. BLACK BEAUTICIANS WERE SELECTED AS FOCAL POINT IN REACHING THIS HIGH-RISK POPULATION BECAUSE DISCUSSIONS OF A PERSONAL NATURE ARE COMMONPLACE IN THE BEAUTY SALON.

Gay Clients have Overwhelmingly Positive Experiences in Psychotherapy

Despite decades of tension between gays and lesbians and the mental health establishment, gay clients overwhelmingly report positive experiences in psychotherapy, according to a report by New York University Professors Mary Ann Jones and Martha A. Gabriel. The professors also found that gay and lesbian clients did not believe it was necessary to have psychotherapists who were gay themselves to have these positive experiences.

According to the study, lesbians and gay men begin treatment at an earlier age than their heterosexual counterparts, have longer periods of treatment, and seem to have a more favorable view of seeking professional help. Their reasons for entering therapy, however, are the same as heterosexual: dissatisfaction with relationships, their work life, their general sense of happiness and well-being.

Of the 600 individuals surveyed who identified as gay or lesbian, 2% were black, reports the NYC publicity office. According to Geanie Bond, a licensed marriage and family therapist with a busy practice of mostly African American gay and lesbian identified clients, black gays and lesbians are "more enthusiastic about therapy and tend to achieve better results and stay in therapy longer" than their black heterosexual counterparts. She also states that the pervasiveness of therapy as taboo in African American culture prevents most blacks from seeking therapy before the crisis stage. She says, "Black gays and lesbians tend to seek help a little before crisis because of compounded issues such as depression brought on by homophobia in black communities."

A red light bulb shines above the door that is the entrance to a luxurious and private meeting place tucked deep in heart of what we now call "Harlem World". Simply tagged Comfort Zone this well-appointed one hundred year old Brownstone is apart of a modern Harlem Renaissance where we have moved far beyond the self conscious creative awakening following the darkness of slavery, beyond the need to proclaim our existence by screaming: "If there' s cure for this I don't want it!!" and onto the next level of our reawakening were we proactively become accountable for our lives, our spirits, and our surroundings creating comfortable supportive safe environments for ourselves.

"I had no place that I wanted to go and just simply socialize," says president Byron Barnes. "I would call my friends to go out and they would all say they were going to bed because there was nothing worth going out to, and it would be 10 o'clock on a Saturday night! I wanted to create a place for my age group where you are not just let loose in a room with a drink in your hand."

After years of working in the cosmetics industry embellishing the looks of renowned personalities like Naomi Simms, Barbara Walters, Iman, and Beverly Johnson, Barnes wanted to give something back to the community.

"I had literally done everyone in the industry. There was not an eye or lip that I had not lined. I wanted a new challenged. I always say you have to know when to leave the party...before they put you out !!!", he chuckles. "I thought that I was good at hosting and planning. I always gave these big elaborate parties that people absolutely loved, so I wanted to do some sort of social club."

"It is not a new concept, it is an old concept with a new twist," he continues. "Comfort Zone is a modern throw back to what gay life was like around the Harlem Renaissance. When there were no gay bars and it was almost illegal to speak the word gay or homosexual; when gay people gathered in private homes to socialize be-

creating a r

ew comfort zone

Chip, Tim, Byron, Christian

"I would love to see a chain of Comfort Zones opened up Atlanta, Chicago and Washington D.C. Everyone aesthetically pleasing, here you can say hello and smile

cause they were a safe haven from a world that hated you and mistreated you because you were gay."

With what he calls a ghettoization of gay life, Barnes points out the need for an alternative to current clubs. "I am supplying something that people wanted but did not have," Byron says confidently. "With the explosion of hip hop as the popular culture, gays and lesbians have taken on some of the homophobic posturing of the rap culture." The younger kids like a place that is extremely anonymous were they do not have to say who they are or what their interest are. A place where everybody is holding up the wall, no one speaks, no one is introduced and there is no universal congeniality. They do not develop any social skills. It is a new thing that stems from gay people wanting to be perceived as straight even to each other," Barnes remarks. "Homophobic homosexuals. These are the type of things which keep us from making good mates for each other."

"There are a ton of intelligent professional black men. I just do not think that there are places where they can BE intelligent."

At one time gay people did not want to be perceived as straight. There was a time when we all twirled and wore blouses because we had pride in our gayness and you knew who where and you had a culture that supported.

As minority gays we have become apathetic when it come to our environment and the places we frequent because we have accepted certain conditions as normal. The fact that a place may not have something as simple as running water and clean bathrooms is not the exception but the norm. No one complains to the management. We accept it.

Comfort Zone is a combination of sultry afro-chicness reminiscent of "Looking for Langston" and the legendary decadence of "Paris is Burning" without the shade, separated into five distinct areas called "Zones".

Cross the doorstep and you immediately step into Zone I: "Community", where after being warmly greet by a host, you are invited too literally "Eat, drink, and be merry." Guests feel at home greeting old friends and making new ones while sampling from the complimentary buffet and open bar. Zone II, "Tranquillity," is the stylishly put together smoke free conversational lounge. A tasteful modern Afrocentric setting wher you'll see artists and authors, thinkers and leaders conversing about philosophy rather than who they had lasts night. In the 1920s you might have seen Claude McKay or Zora Neale Hurston. Today you may spot will authors like E. Lynn Harris chillin' with a hot wing.

Prior to moving into Zone III called "Simplicity," you must place your shoes in the lux silk lined shoe closet. After all this is the barefoot audio and visual space. Complimented by surround sound and full cable access, this is the perfect area to romp with a prospective date, read, or even meditate. Zone IV is Innovative Fitness Group, "Mobility" for short. This state of art private gym facility is available on an unsupervised

places like
wants a place that is
each other." —*Byron Barnes*

daily or weekly basis offering a variety of activities from physical therapy to self-defense. "Sensuality" is Zone V where you can enjoy a slow dance or a full body massage.

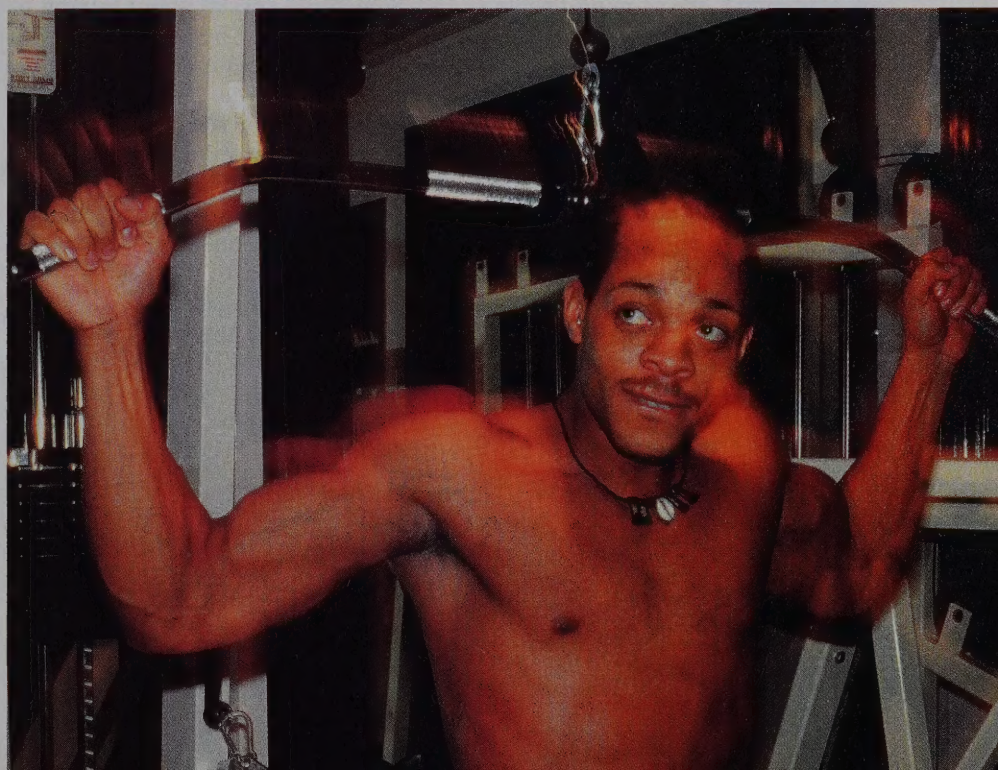
Aside from being a social gathering place, Comfort Zone hosts a variety of events including birthday parties to weddings. The doors are always open to community related organizations.

"I would love to see a chain of Comfort Zones opened up in places like Atlanta, Chicago and Washington, D.C. Everyone wants a place that is aesthetically pleasing, where you can say hello and smile at each other.

A place where you can sit and be comfortable and most of all where there is a service orientated staff. A staff that is professional and helpful.

Most of all people want a place were they can be themselves. People want to feel special. Ultimately we are all responsible for creating comfortable zones for each other.

—Quohnos Mitchell



PHOTOGRAPHY BY TINA PAUL

Mary and

A gifted playwright, performer, and professor, Dr. Shirlene Holmes originally selected "Mary and Lou" from her fictional Cotsville Stories series for Venus readers in early 1995. Back by popular demand, we now revisit the town of Cotsville!

Mary and Lou were bulldaggers. I can't say it no plainer than that. Everybody in Cotsville, from the front of the town to the back, knew Mary was a woman to her heart, but Lou had mannish ways. Lou even looked like a man with her plaid work shirt on and muddy construction worker boots.

It made Mother Martha's flesh crawl just to think about it; how in the world could two women's get together like that. She didn't like to mind people's business, but there was some things that even God don't like and that woman-for-woman mess was one of them things.

Clevertta didn't like them either and she would get on the phone with Teresa and talk loud about how Mary and Lou was living in sin and God was gonna clean their playhouse up one of these days. Teresa said, "Yes, chile, we can't have that around here with our children watching."

They both spent long dimes talking about how they wondered what bulldaggers did in bed. Clevertta said, "I can't be AC running on a DC current; give me a man. Two of 'em if you got 'em."

Teresa said, "I know what you mean, girl. All women can do for me is point me to the nearest man; shit, I wanna be satisfied, not frustrated."

Mary and Lou had long got over worrying about what people think and say. They had been together ten years. They had stuck it out and moving to Cotsville wasn't gonna change them none. Lou knew when she was a girl that sex and men don't mix. She had a Jamaican boy once and when the bleeding stopped, that was it. It was much harder for Mary at first. She had been married twelve years with one daughter and it took a lot to change her mind. What she liked about being with Lou is that she could be close to her and not be afraid.

Something special about talking to another woman, there's so much you don't have to explain. Loving a woman outside the bed was easy for Mary, but when it come to getting in the bed with a woman, that was the hardest thing to do for a long while. When she and Lou got together the first time, you couldn't tell Mary that God wasn't gonna set them on fire right in that bed.

But it never happened.

For a long time Missionary Porter kept telling everybody, the two were just friends. But wasn't no way in hell Magnolia and Gardenioa, the Flowers' twin girls, was gonna believe that Mary and Lou was just friends. Magnolia say they was Soddom and Go-morrah people and they going to hell sure as you're born. Gardenia say, "now, come on, sister, God got more sense than that. He's gonna leave them right here so we can see how not to live." Mother Martha would just shake her head and mumble about how queasy her stomach got every time Mary and Lou walked by.

Sometimes Lou and Mary wondered why in the hell they moved to Cotsville anyway knowing how much people hated them. They had put their mobile home in that town just till they could get their money together; that was five years ago. They kept saying they was gonna move, but every time spring come, they loved the place more and more. Not for the people, but for the trees and grass and lazy dogs that came and sat in their yard each day.

When they needed a laugh, Mary and Lou would stop and talk about that get-acquainted barbecue they had when they first moved to Cotsville. They wanted people to see they was normal and nice. Several folks came to that Fourth of July cook out and ate like pigs. Mother Martha stuffed herself so full, Clovis Jr. had to hold her steady as she waddled home. Clevertta sniffed all the food before she ate it, just to make sure it was sanitary. Betty Lou wouldn't even use the restroom; she walked all the way home and had to pee so bad when she got there, she could almost taste it. Mary and Lou knew it was the itch of their curiosity that drove everybody to the Fourth of July affair. They gave up on the people of Cotsville and decided to stay to themselves.

The only one that befriended them was Missionary Porter who didn't care

Lou

what they was doing. They was Jesus' children and she didn't pay the people in Cotsville no mind. Mildred kept telling the Missionary that she'd get a "nasty woman's disease" if she went in that trailer and used the toilet.

But Missionary paid Mildred no never mind and pressed her way. Joe Kellum put it out in the streets that Missionary was "one of them thespian women" and had a sweet thing in St. Louie. This was a boldfaced lie cause Missionary didn't know a living or dead soul in that city.

The first time Missionary knocked on the door to the mobile home, Lou wondered what in the hell did this old woman want. She wasn't in no mood for no he say, she say shit, nor was she ready for another Jesus sermon. And she wasn't gonna put up with no interrogation, not today.

Mary jumped up to tidy things, though the house was clean as a church.

The smell of the cornbread came in before Missionary Porter did. "Thought you sweet girls would want some of my bread. There's a pound of butter in it."

Lou was softened by her seventy year old face. "Thank you, ma'am," Mary said taking the bread to the kitchenette.

Missionary Porter continued, "I'm glad to find ya'll home. I didn't have your number to call. I hope you don't think I ain't polite cause my mother raised me right."

"That's alright, Mrs. Porter," Mary said.

The only one that befriended them was Missionary Porter who didn't care what they was doing. They was Jesus' children and she didn't pay the people in Cotsville no mind.

"Call me, Missionary, baby, that would mean all the world to me."

None of them could think of a word to say, so they sat there, the fan whirring, and the ball game playing quietly on the radio.

"Can I offer you some lemonade, Missionary?" Lou asked. "Yes, baby, My whistle is a little dry; I could appreciate that now. Is that made from that resubstituted stuff or the real thing?"

"It's the real thing," Mary offered, trying to comfort.

They sat and sipped and each stared in a different direction. After about twenty minutes, Missionary pulled herself from the chair and headed home. The rest of the night was full of expectancy as if something had not come out or been said. Lou stayed up late warring inside. Mary went on to bed but the covers entangled her like two great arms and shook her restless. They were scared to touch the cornbread. Mary finally broke down and Lou ate some from her mouth. It was the best they'd ever tasted.

Missionary knocked seven days later,

mopping her forehead with a hanky that had lace all around the rim. "Girls, I'm glad I could get back to see you. Aren't you glad?"

"Yes," Mary said smiling, giving into the old woman.

Lou just nodded in affirmation. The visit was easier. Missionary Porter asked them if they wanted to come to revival to hear the Reverend C.W. Gillespie preach. They declined not because they didn't want to go, but because they had tickets to the show at the university theater that weekend.

Missionary left after thumbing through their many photographs and giving Mary plenty of medicine advice, like putting an onion in your sock when you have a fever, laying on the Bible to stop a headache, and two teaspoons of white vinegar for each quart of water would beat any woman's disease.

Still the air was full. They shared another heavy night. Lou neither Mary went to work the next morning. They thought maybe Missionary Porter was bringing spirits in or working roots on them; the strangeness of this new relationship was a strain.

Three days later the old woman returned. This time with a sweet potato pie still warm from the oven. When she handed it over, Mary felt like she was receiving a just-born baby in a bunting. They cut into it quickly. Lou savored her portion like a woman's breast. Mary was careful not to drop a crumb and even Missionary, who baked these weekly, had to confess she had put a hurting on that pie. After eating, they sighed and sat still. Missionary could be heard rolling an ice cube around in her mouth and crushing it between her dentures.

Someone had to speak, so she did. "Baby girls, you all know I'm a sanctified woman."

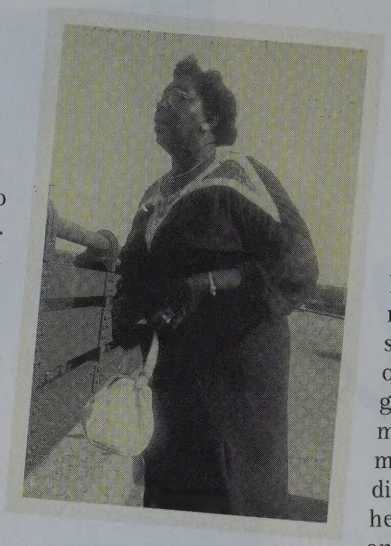
They affirmed with a nod.

"And you know I'm water-baptized, holy ghost-filled, and running for my life."

They believed it was true.

"Something I got to say, been wanting to say it since I been in your place. I wouldn't tell you nothing wrong. I asked God to give me the words to say. Lou got sour right off cause she knew what was coming. Why did this old woman have to destroy this evening with a sermon, a testimony, a reprimand. She had heard them all. Lou wanted to make the woman quiet up, fill her with more pie, but Mary moved a little closer to her companion and one slight touch stilled the waters. The confession began.

"When I was you age, Mary, I knew a woman name Margaret. She had hair white as a cotton flower and light black skin. And if you'll pardon me, Miss Lou, there wasn't nothing woman about her 'cept the hint of red lipstick she always wore. I don't know why I was drawn to her, but I truly was. She learned me so many things about God and about myself. I don't think I knew anything about myself till I met Margaret. Don't get me wrong; I knew God, but me, I didn't know about me. She learn me that I got every element inside me. I got a shower and I got a fire. I got a wind and I got an earth.



I believe God sent her to me. She was an evangelist, who had made up in her mind from the time she was eleven years old that she was gonna live without men and from the moment I met her, I did too. I used to make her sweet 'tayta pie and she'd read me the Bible. I ain't never heard nothing like it. Seem like all those folks in the Bible just got up and walked when she read to me. We'd sit and she'd vision this great ministry she would have. It come to true, I know, cause I traveled with her for fifteen years. The last stop was here in Cotsville where after a Sunday evening service, she died in my arms."

'Don't tell things of understanding to a fool.' That's what Margaret used to say. People in Cotsville think with a carnal mind, not a spirit one, remember that.

The silence in the room got so deep and wide. Mary craved to hold Lou's hand, as Missionary began rocking back and forth, tears brimming but never falling from her eyes. Lou left for the bathroom. When she returned Missionary was finishing her lemonade. The old woman kissed both of their hands and turned to leave. As she remembered, she paused.

"What I told ya'll is nothing to tell others. That's just a present for the two of you. 'Don't tell things of understanding to a fool.' That's what Margaret used to say. People in Cotsville think with a carnal mind, not a spirit one, remember that. Half the people sending folks to hell is going themselves; hell's gonna be so full, you're gonna need a reservation to get in. I love you girls so much, not just because you Jesus' children, but because you done learn how to suffer for what you want. God sees and knows."

When the door latched behind her, Mary and Lou wrapped themselves together and mixed their tears.

Missionary Porter came back often, but this was the visit they never talked about again.

Gladys Bentley (1907-1960)

Gladys Bentley lit up cafe society in the 1920s and '30s singing bawdy lyrics based on popular tunes of the day. Dressed in top hat and tails, Bentley put on the ritz in Harlem's "Jungle Alley"—a strip of clubs between Lenox and Seventh Avenues on 133rd Street. She performed at the most famous gay-oriented club of the era—Harry Hansberry's Clam House, a speakeasy also on 133rd Street. According to Eric Garber in an article on the Jazz Age in Harlem, "Bentley, a masculine, dark-skinned lesbian, performed all night long in a white tuxedo and top hat... Langston Hughes called her an amazing exhibition of musical energy." Eslanda Goode Robeson, wife of actor Paul Robeson, gushed to a friend, "Gladys Bentley is grand! I've heard her three nights and will never be the same." Educator Harold Jackman wrote to his friend Countee Cullen, "When Gladys sings 'St. James Infirmary,' it makes you weep your heart out."

In her act she openly and riotously flirted with women in the audience and often had a chorus line of men backing her. Bentley parlayed her talent and notoriety into a Park Avenue apartment, servants, and a beautiful car.

Alas, things fall apart. Prohibition sent her white clientele back downtown to new speakeasies and the Depression drew the final curtain on an era when white society went to Harlem in diamonds and furs. Bentley left New York for Los Angeles where she performed sporadically. Fearing the results of McCarthyism and succumbing to a society that had become harsher toward gays, Bentley, in 1950, wrote an article for *Ebony* entitled "I Am a Woman Again," in which she claimed to have cured her lesbianism by way of female hormone treatments. A decade later, she was about to be ordained as a minister when she died of influenza in 1960 at the age of fifty-two. She had fought the good fight for lesbians. In the end had she truly changed? Only Gladys Bentley really knows.

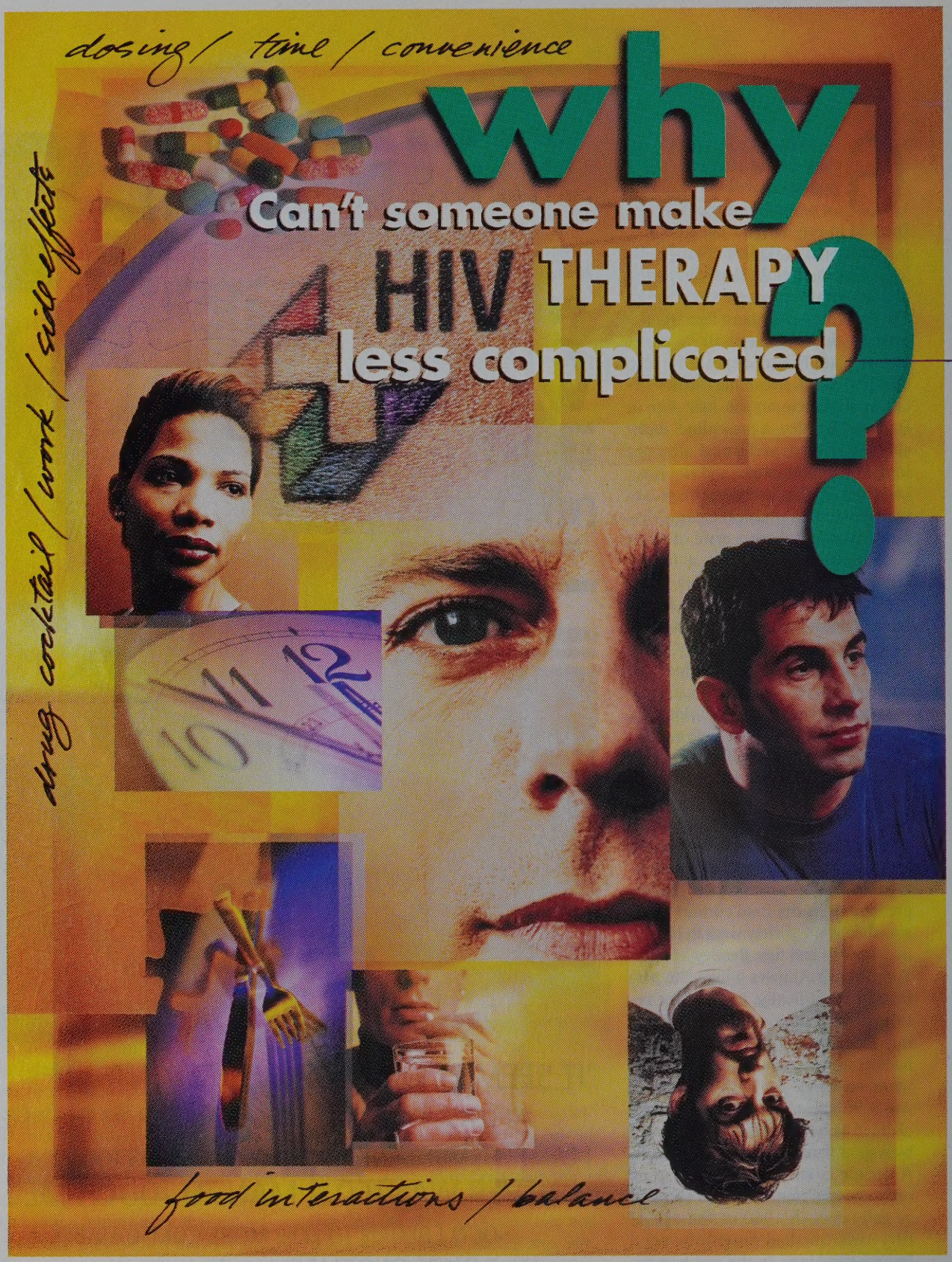
- Phil Petrie

PHOTO COURTESY BLACK PATTI RESEARCH

A LESBIAN WHO SANG THE BLUES

"IT SEEMS I WAS BORN DIFFERENT. AT LEAST, I ALWAYS THOUGHT SO.... FROM THE TIME I CAN REMEMBER ANYTHING, EVEN AS I WAS TODDLING, I NEVER WANTED A MAN TO TOUCH ME... SOON I BEGAN TO FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE IN BOYS' CLOTHES THAN IN DRESSES."

Gladys Bentley, *Ebony 1950*


dosing / time / convenience
why
Can't someone make
HIV THERAPY
less complicated
?
drug cocktail / work / side effects
food interactions / balance

someone just did!

Once Daily

SUSTIVA™

efavirenz

New SUSTIVA™ is the first HIV drug approved to be taken once-a-day as part of your combination therapy. Just take three 200 mg capsules together once daily, with or without food; high fat meals should be avoided. Your doctor may suggest taking SUSTIVA at bedtime to reduce any side effects you may experience.

SUSTIVA, an NNRTI*, must be used in combination with other HIV drugs.

SUSTIVA is tough on HIV. It reduces the amount of virus in your blood and increases the number of CD4 cells. SUSTIVA can even be used in young children, 3 years of age or older. This is based on results from controlled clinical trials at 24 weeks. Presently, there are no results from controlled clinical trials showing the long-term effects of SUSTIVA.

SUSTIVA has manageable side effects. Most side effects are mild to moderate and can be managed. The most significant side effects associated with SUSTIVA therapy have been nervous system symptoms (dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating and/or abnormal dreams) and rash. These usually subside within the first two to four weeks of treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. Taking SUSTIVA at bedtime may help make nervous system symptoms less noticeable.

Pregnancy should be avoided in women receiving SUSTIVA because birth defects have been seen in primates dosed with SUSTIVA. Barrier contraception should always be used in combination with other methods of contraception.

Talk to your doctor when you start taking SUSTIVA. SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines (including ones for HIV). Always tell your doctor if you are taking, starting or changing any prescription or non-prescription medicine when taking SUSTIVA. Your doctor may change your medicines or change their dose. You should discuss your prior medical conditions (such as mental illness, substance abuse, hepatitis, etc.) with your doctor before taking SUSTIVA.

We know that coping with HIV is difficult enough. Your treatment doesn't have to be. Ask your doctor about SUSTIVA. For more important information see the next page for Patient Information about SUSTIVA.

New For HIV

Finally, a once daily medication to treat HIV.

SUSTIVA. It's about time.

www.sustiva.com

*NNRTI - non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor.

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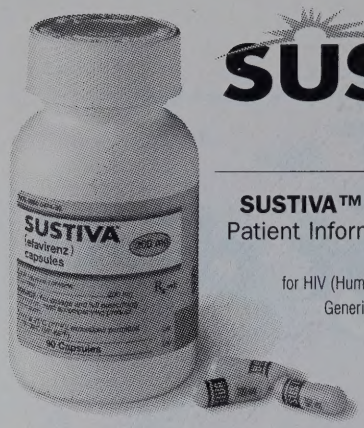

Once Daily

SUSTIVA™

efavirenz

SUSTIVA™ (efavirenz) capsules

Patient Information about SUSTIVA*

(sus-TEE-vah)

for HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) Infection

Generic name: efavirenz (eh-FAH-vih-rehnz)

Please read this information before you start taking SUSTIVA. Read it again each time you refill your prescription, in case there is any new information. Don't treat this leaflet as your only source of information about SUSTIVA. Always discuss SUSTIVA with your doctor when you start taking your medicine and at every visit. You should remain under a doctor's care when using SUSTIVA. You should not change or stop treatment without first talking to your doctor.

What is SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA is a medicine used to help treat HIV, the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). SUSTIVA is a type of HIV drug called a "non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor" (NNRTI).

How does SUSTIVA work?

SUSTIVA works by lowering the amount of HIV in the blood (called "viral load"). SUSTIVA must be taken with other anti-HIV medicines. When taken with other anti-HIV medicines, SUSTIVA has been shown to reduce viral load and increase the number of CD4 cells (a type of immune cell in blood). SUSTIVA may not have these effects in every patient.

Does SUSTIVA cure HIV or AIDS?

SUSTIVA is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking SUSTIVA may still develop other infections associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important that you remain under the care of your doctor.

Does SUSTIVA reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

SUSTIVA has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others. Continue to practice safe sex, and do not use or share dirty needles.

How should I take SUSTIVA?

- The dose of SUSTIVA for adults is 600 mg (three 200 mg capsules, taken together) once a day by mouth. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower (see **Can children take SUSTIVA?**).
- Take SUSTIVA at the same time each day. You should take SUSTIVA at bedtime during the first few weeks or if you have side effects, such as dizziness or trouble concentrating (see **What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?**).
- Swallow SUSTIVA with water, juice, milk or soda. You may take SUSTIVA with or without meals; however, SUSTIVA should not be taken with a high fat meal.
- Do not miss a dose of SUSTIVA. If you forget to take SUSTIVA, take the missed dose right away. If you do miss a dose, do not double the next dose. Carry on with your regular dosing schedule. If you need help in planning the best times to take your medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Take the exact amount of SUSTIVA your doctor prescribes. Never change the dose on your own. Do not stop this medicine unless your doctor tells you to stop.
- When your SUSTIVA supply starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to SUSTIVA and become harder to treat.

Can children take SUSTIVA?

Yes, children who are able to swallow capsules can take SUSTIVA. Rash may be a serious problem in some children. Tell your child's doctor right away if you notice rash or any other side effects while your child is taking SUSTIVA. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower than the dose for adults. Capsules containing lower doses of SUSTIVA are available. Your child's doctor will determine the right dose based on your child's weight.

Who should not take SUSTIVA?

Do not take SUSTIVA if you are allergic to SUSTIVA or any of its ingredients.

What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor?

Talk to your doctor right away if you:

- Are pregnant or want to become pregnant
- Are breast-feeding
- Have problems with your liver, or have had hepatitis
- Start or change any medicine
- Have side effects while taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz)
- Have a history of mental illness, substance or alcohol abuse

What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?

Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams a few hours after starting treatment with SUSTIVA. These feelings may be less noticeable if you take SUSTIVA at bedtime. They also tend to go away after you've taken the medicine for a few weeks. Rarely, patients have more serious side effects that may affect mood or ability to think clearly. These side effects occur more often in patients with a history of mental illness or substance abuse. Tell your doctor promptly if any of these side effects continue or if they bother you. There is the possibility that these symptoms may be more severe if SUSTIVA is used with alcohol or mood altering (street) drugs. You should avoid driving or operating machinery if you are having these side effects.

One of the most common side effects is rash. These rashes usually go away without any change in treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. If you develop a rash, call your doctor promptly.

Other common side effects include tiredness, upset stomach, vomiting, and diarrhea. However, this is not a complete list of side effects reported with SUSTIVA when taken with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss a more complete list of side effects with you.

Please contact your doctor immediately before stopping SUSTIVA because of side effects. Tell your doctor or other healthcare provider if you notice any side effects while taking SUSTIVA.

What about birth control, pregnancy, or breast-feeding?

Women should not become pregnant while taking SUSTIVA. Birth defects have been seen in animals treated with SUSTIVA. It is not known whether this could happen in humans. You should use a condom or diaphragm in addition to other methods of birth control while taking SUSTIVA. Inform your doctor immediately if you are pregnant. If you want to become pregnant, talk to your doctor. Do not take SUSTIVA if you are breast-feeding. Talk to your doctor if you are breast-feeding your baby.

Can I take other medicines with SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines (including ones for HIV). Your doctor may change your medicines or change their doses. For this reason, it is very important to:

- Let all your doctors and pharmacists know that you take SUSTIVA.
- Tell your doctors and pharmacists about all medicines you take. This includes those you buy over-the-counter and herbal or natural remedies.

Bring all your medicines when you see a doctor, or make a list of their names, how much you take, and how often you take them. This will give your doctor a complete picture of the medicines you use. Then he or she can decide the best approach for your situation.

The following medicines may cause serious and life-threatening side effects when taken with SUSTIVA. You should not take any of these medicines while taking SUSTIVA:**

- Hismanal® (astemizole)
- Propulsid® (cisapride)
- Versed® (midazolam)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Ergot medications (for example, Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

The following medicines may need to be changed or have their dose changed when taken with SUSTIVA:**

- Crixivan® (indinavir)
- Fortovase® (saquinavir)
- Biaxin® (clarithromycin)

How should I keep SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA is available as 50 mg, 100 mg, and 200 mg capsules.

Keep SUSTIVA at room temperature (77°F) in the bottle given to you by your pharmacist. The temperature can range from 59°-86°F.

Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children.

How can I learn more about SUSTIVA?

Talk to your doctor or other healthcare provider if you have questions about either SUSTIVA or HIV. For additional information you can visit the SUSTIVA website at http://www.sustiva.com.

This medicine was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children. If you suspect that more than the prescribed dose of this medicine has been taken, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

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DuPont Pharmaceuticals
Wilmington, DE 19880
Issued September, 1998

Remembering Reggie Williams

Photo by Ron Singleton

AIDS and black gay activist Reggie Williams, who in the early 1980s "was one of the first to recognize that information and prevention efforts were not reaching the gay and bisexual black community," died Feb. 7 of AIDS-related complications at age 47. A celebration of his life will be held at San Francisco City Hall on his birthday, April 29. The San Francisco Chronicle reports that Williams, who was HIV positive for the past 13 years, was founding director of the National Task Force on AIDS Prevention, which worked to raise [HIV awareness and Prevention for Gay and Bisexual men of all colors]

In 1980, Williams founded the National Association of Black and White Men Together to, purge the white gay community of its bias against black gays. In December of 1989, he took his messages to the streets and led a protest in Washington, DC, "demanding more federal funds for AIDS research, as well as food, shelter, and health care for AIDS patients around the nation" (Pimsleur, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2/15/99). Williams' friend and colleague Phill Wilson said, "What he said is that it was unhealthy to compartmentalize our identities. There was not ever a discrete point where one's blackness ended and one's gayness began. What we all understood, what Reggie understood, is that AIDS really was a symptom. It was a symptom, a metaphor, for what happens in the absence of self-affirming community and identity. Reggie was an AIDS pioneer" (Wright, *Washington Blade*, 2/12/99). Many African American Gay and Lesbian activist attribute their work, dedication, and inspiration to the tutelage of Reggie Williams.

We will sorely miss you Reggie.

- Edited by Maurice Franklin

COMPILED AN D PHOTOGRAPHED
BY RON SINGLETON

Does your mama know that you're gay?

Everyone's got a story about how their parents found out about their being in the life. For those of you who think your parents don't know "because you've never discussed it," get over it! All parents KNOW. They may not WANT to know but they do. I mean come on, you're thirty years old, still have a "roommate," and seem completely uninterested in the opposite sex. Pa-leeeze! Not only does your Mama know, but the rest of your family knows too. Just for the record we asked a few people about their stories!

MARTINA DOWNEY, 35+ SALES REPRESENTATIVE, PUBLISHING INDUSTRY, BROOKLYN, NY

"Yes, my parents do know I am lesbian. I told them in 1982. They kind of asked me if I were gay, and I said, 'yeah'. They kind of got upset, and threw me out of the house. Now we're sort of stand offish, but in a neutral zone.

There's no animosity, I've forgiven them. They've evolved in some ways, but they still can't make that change, that break with themselves I'm still hoping for. I'm still working towards that, but I know that my church family is my real family, the community that I belong to is my real family."

ASABI BAYE DAVIS, 43, PAINTER/CONSTRUCTION WORKER, IRVINGTON, NJ

"Yes my parents know. I really didn't tell them, they asked my sister when I was about eighteen years old and I left home and moved in with my first girlfriend. But I came up in a family where I have two gay aunts, so it was always there in the family and it really wasn't a problem."

TRINA LAMB, 28, AGENCY SERVICE REP, BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD, IRVINGTON, NJ

"Yes, my mother found out by accident when I was approximately thirteen years old. She came into the bathroom and saw me kissing my girlfriend.

After that experience, however, and the shock, she was quite comfortable with it and said 'as long as you're happy, I totally support you and I love you because you're my daughter!'"

"who said that?"

"We must open the wounds of slavery and oppression to heal them and to truly bring liberty and justice and the pursuit of happiness to everyone, including those of different sexual orientations, and to finally unite ALL of the people as God's family."

—Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, speaking at Ebeneezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, GA.

"People who are gay haven't chosen their sexual orientation. It must be a crazy person who chooses to be gay in such a homophobic world. Let's work for real tolerance."

—Archbishop Tutu, receiving an honorary doctorate from Bishop's University, in an English-speaking enclave east of Montreal.

McNamara

"Magic Johnson is a dangerous image because he leads the public to believe that you can take 3 HIV cocktails a day and have a healthy normal life opening up movie theatres, and hosting T.V. shows."

"Large churches are like drive-in movies theaters. Everyone is watching the movie but sitting in their own car with the windows up so no one talks to each other. The individual does not become responsible to their church. Heterosexuals in Black churches are in the closet about HIV and so it has taken a toll on their children. I would like to pass out condoms in the collection plate!" "Brothers and Sisters need to bring their sexuality to the forefront and invade the Black church about accepting their homosexual congregation."

—Dr. Michael Eric Dyson, author, in a keynote speech at the 12th National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Conference, Atlanta, GA

ATTENTION BROTHAS AND SISTAHS!

Have you received an Award, Promotion, Commitment, New Baby?

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Venus Magazine
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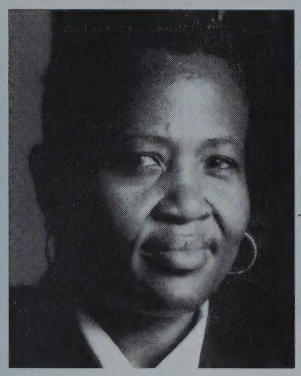
Outstanding!



BRENDA CRAWFORD

has been selected as the1999 Outstanding Woman Of The Year In Community Service in Alameda County, CA by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, The Commission On the Status Of Women and The Alameda County Health Care Foundation. She will be permanently inducted into the Alameda County Women's Hall Of Frame. This is the first time that this award has been given to an out, African American Lesbian.

"I am humbled, and honored by this award," said Crawford from her office in Oakland. "What I think this really means is that the African American LGBT community in Alameda County, primarily in Oakland has been working for years to increase our visibility, and political involvement, and some of that work is finally starting to pay off. Most of us just want what all Americans want, and are entitled to; full inclusion, and protection under the law."

MARY F. MORTEN

was appointed by the The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) to its Board of Directors. A native of Chicago, Morten has a long history of work within the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and progressive communities. In 1997, Mayor Richard Daley appointed Morten to the position of Director and Liaison for the Advisory Council on Lesbian and Gay Issues, a position she still holds. She was the first African-American president of the Chicago chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW), and was inducted in 1996 into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame for her outstanding contributions to that community. She has also served as a host on Chicago's Lesbigay Radio.

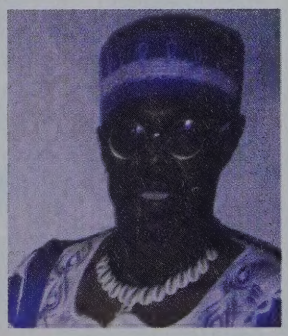
"I have always been a fan and a follower of GLAAD's work," said Morten. "I'm excited to join the national board, where I will be able to bring the perspective of community activism and government advocacy on behalf of the lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender community. Ensuring a diverse and inclusive representation of our community in the media is of primary importance to me. I look forward to working to bring GLAAD's vital work to the attention of our colleagues in Chicago and throughout the Midwest."

MS. RAMONA BRIDGES,

was promoted to Deputy Director of Youth Services department at the L.A. Gay and Lesbian Center, after working as a Youth Advocate since 1995. The Youth Services department of the L.A. Gay and Lesbian Center is the only organization in the city offering transitional living and educational programs, as well as health and emergency services designed especially for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth. Ms. Bridges holds a BA in Psychology from Pomona College in Clarement, CA. A native of Austin, Texas, she has lived in L.A. for twenty years.

MS. KATHRYN WHITE,

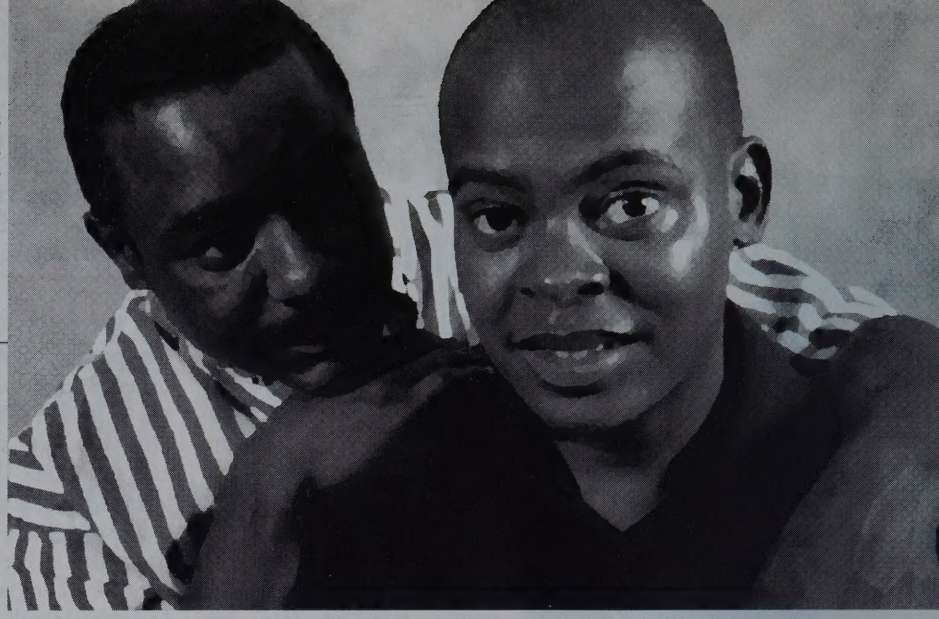
was recently promoted to Director of Special Events for the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center. This is her fourth promotion in the four and a half years she has worked for the Gay and Lesbian Center. Ms. White will be responsible for such signature events as "Black Satin: A Tribute to the Legendary Female Jazz and Blues Singers" and the annual "Women's Night," the largest lesbian dinner and dance in the world. Special Events are expected to raise more than one million dollars for vital social, educational and health services at the L.A. Gay and Lesbian center in the next year. Ms. White also serves on the Board of Directors for the Alcoholism Center for Women and, when she has a moment, she enjoys painting and spending time with her talking parrot, Mekeeda, and cat, Nunu. Ms. White is a native of L.A.



CARL DE VINE,

I was honored with an Unsung Hero award for his continuous and tireless effort on behalf of people with AIDS. The Unsung Hero award was awarded to De Vine, by 100 Black Men of America, the National Council of Negro Women, and the National Black Caucus. The Unsung Hero award recipients are selected by the Center for Disease Control. Carl DeVine is a true unsung hero and a man committed to the fight against AIDS.

He said, "I didn't want to do it (fight AIDS), but if I didn't, who would?"



RON SINGLETON

Sex Talk

Q: I have been separated from my lover of three years, for several months. He claimed that I was not as sexually and emotionally expressive as he would like. He interpreted this, to some extent, as representing a lack of love on my part, and he left the relationship. I have worked on myself with this issue and feel that I'm ready to fully express how very much I do love him—sexually and emotionally. I have wanted a second chance, but now I'm not sure. My problem is this. My best friend of twelve years knows I want to return to my ex-lover. He has revealed to me that my ex-lover has made overt sexual advances towards him and several other men in our circle. This happened while we were still together. Is my ex-lover untrustworthy or was this my fault because of my sexual problems?

SIGNED,
GUILTY AND UNTRUSTING

A: Your situation brings up many questions. Did sexual behaviors actually occur between your best friend and ex-lover? And, did they occur with "the circle of men"? Was "safe" sex involved? Did your best friend have sexual feelings towards you? However, I shall attempt to remain focused on the most relevant issues. First, congratulations on taking charge of yourself and improving in those much-needed areas. No need, however, to feel guilty. You did not produce your partner's untrustworthy sexual behavior. He is responsible for his behavior. The two of you were, indeed, having sexual issues. But that your partner chose to solve these outside of the relationship, speaks of commitment and fidelity issues more than sexual issues. The question you might prefer to ask of yourself is "Can I trust this wonderful vulnerable gift of sexual and emotional expression to someone who is not committed to me?" I suspect this might be the cause of your issues from the onset.

Geanie Bond is a licensed marriage and family therapist in Atlanta, GA. Contact her at 404-256-6709.

Ask Marian

Q: I am 39 years old and have been with my partner for over 8 years. I have built my career and now I want to have a baby. The problem is I keep talking about it but feel stuck. I am leaning towards having a biological child. I would have artificial insemination. However, I am passionate about family history and my cultural heritage and it is important to me to know the family roots of my child's father. I don't know any men who would be willing or suitable as a donor. Plus, my partner is lukewarm to the whole idea. She has three children of her own. I guess I don't want to go through all this feeling like I am on my own. Family is everything to me.

SIGNED LUKE WARM

A: What a wonderful desire you have, to have baby! The concerns you bring up are deeply personal and are about what you want and how much you want it in a world whose dominant model of parenting is biologically-centered. Considered all your options if you choose the biological route: artificial insemination through a known or unknown donor, in-vitro fertilization (you can have your partner's egg fertilized then implanted in your own womb), or surrogacy (your fertilized egg is implanted in another woman's womb). Costs can soar depending on the method. There are legal considerations to all these options including co-parenting agreements, donor-recipient agreements, second-parent adoption, and guardianship. Living your life as a lesbian is probably a departure from your dominant cultural roots. Consider reframing your concern about losing family roots by recognizing that cultures throughout the world prescribe that children take their name and their parentage from their mother. Find out all your partner's fears and get counseling if you are still stuck.

Below is a list of organizations that may be able to address your questions and put you in touch with information and support. Remember, by not choosing to act, you make a choice.

Love Makes a Family Inc.
P.O. Box 11694
Portland OR 97211
(503) 228-3892

Center Kids, The Family Project
Lesbian/Gay Community Services Ctr
208 West 13th St.
New York, N.Y. 10011
(212) 620-7310

National Gay & Lesbian Task Force
Family Issues Project
1517 U St. NW
Washington D.C. 20009
(202) 332-6483
Lesbian & Gay Parenting Project

c/o Lyon-Martin Clinic
2480 Mission Street, Suite 214
San Francisco CA 94110
(415) 525-7312

Let's TALK ABOUT SEX

and a possible vaccine for HIV!

Sexually active, HIV negative men needed for an HIV vaccine research study. You cannot get AIDS from the vaccine.

For information call toll free: **(877) 6-VAXGEN**

(877) 682-9436

Photo: E. Kotila, Berkeley © 1999

ArtsTour 2000 Puts African Diaspora LGBT Artists Center Stage

Planning is already underway for a historic national tour of black l/g/b/t writers, visual and performing artists. ArtsTour 2000, is the brainchild of publisher/author Alaric Wendell Blair (An End of Innocence, a journey into the life, Mirage Publishing 1998), and stems from a recent gathering of black writers at the Behind Our Masks Conference in Washington, D.C. in October 1998.

The tour, which welcomes new and established artists from all disciplines, will celebrate the arts and letters of l/g/b/t of African descent by creating venues for their work and will serve to offer greater visibility of black queer artists. Among the many artists nationwide who have already pledged their time and service to this groundbreaking project, are James Earl Hardy (B-Boy Blues), Sharon Bridgeforth (Bull Jean Stories), Kathleen Morris (Speaking In Whispers), G. Winston James (Other-Countries Anthologies), Lisa Moore (Redbone Press/Does Your Mama Know), Robert E. Penn (Gay Men's Wellness Guide), Ricc Rollins (Like Breathing), Dwayne Carter (The Best Man), Lorenzo C. Robertson (Me, Myself & I). and filmmaker Aishah Simmons (NO!) The tour is also supported by such organizations as Venus Magazine, Clique Magazine, Ishai Books and the National Black Lesbian & Gay Leadership Forum.

Representatives from ArtsTour will be on hand at the Unity V Conference in Chicago April 16-18 and the 2nd Annual BOOK HOUSE CAFE Reader/Writer/Publisher Workshop Book Signing, which will be held in Oakland on June 19, 1999.

Additionally, information can be obtained by sending an email to: ArtsTour2000@egroups.com.

Corrections Some names of individuals appearing in photos on page 33, Vol.4 No.4 taken at Astraea National Lesbian Action Foundation were spelled incorrectly. The proper spelling of those named are photo #5: (l to r) Gliza Mullen of AALUSC, Tracy Little, Collette Carter of AALUSC; photo #7: Nelcia Clarence, Kim Ford of AALUSC, Dulce Reyes of Las Buenas Amigas.

THE BLACKSTRIPE
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The Blackstripe, www.blackstripe.com your web address for information and news for and about same-gender-loving, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people of African descent. Features the Blacklist, a listing of notable sgl/lgbt people of African descent, www.blackstripe.com/blacklist.

Free Personals
Free Websites
Books
Flowers
Music
Gifts
Links
News

Make the Blackstripe your site for news and information about you!
www.blackstripe.com

Collective Voices

What do you call 300 dynamic black lesbians from around the country who come together for enriching dialogue and inspirational performances? CLOAVE, Collective Lesbians of African-Descent Voices Everywhere! In it's third year, the group has planned an exceptional event that is 'must' for sistahs attending Black Pride in Washington, D.C. in May. Invited panelists include Barbara Kigozi, Vidoegrapher & Photographer; Denise Bentley, Associate Director of Boston's Fenway clinic; Carlene Cheatum, Public Advocate for the D.C. Mayor's office; Nadine Smith, Founder and Executive Director of Equality Florida; Pastor Wanda Floyd, Founder and Pastor of Imani Temple, Dr. Andrea Sullivan, Naturopath and Homeopathic expert, and Charlene Cothran, Publisher of Venus Magazine.

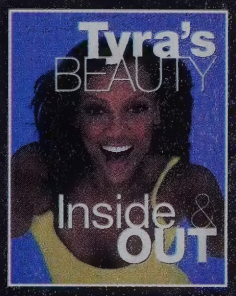
Performances are scheduled by She-Black, a Canadian modern dance troupe; Dr. Kofi Adoma, violinist and activist; Kimberly Pernell, New York-based performance artist and entertainment editor for Venus Magazine; RAH, soul lyricist and an drumming group called AKWABA, bringing an Afri-Am-Native Drummawomyn vibe! Rebecca A. Helem, president and lead organizer is excited to present the event. "Energy is so running high that we predict our heaviest turn out ever." The event takes place on Saturday May 29, 1999 at 12:00 pm in Washington, DC at MCC 474 Ridge Street, NW during Black Pride weekend. For information call 202-544-9298.

Tyra Banks

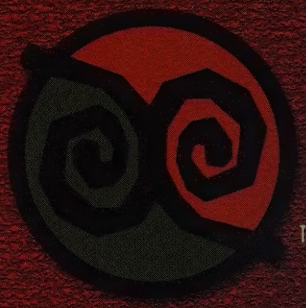
TiTTY COMMITTEE

"The media and the general public seem obsessed with my breast. Are they real or are they fake? When ever I go to the GYN for a breast exam, I tell her, "I wish you could televise this so the whole world could see I'm all natural." I used to joke and laugh and say the rumors didn't bother me, but they really do hurt my feelings. No matter what I say, people will believe what they want to believe, and I've just got to learn to live with that."

Those candid words from Supermodel Tyra Banks, are excerpt from her new book Beauty Inside and Out. The leggy diva honestly discusses her beauty secrets and rituals about hair, skin, make-up, fitness, dating pitfalls, family issues and personal heath. In one chapter she shares her personal experiences about overcoming poor self-esteem as a 'super bony' pre-teen. Her addiction to junk food early in her modeling career once caused her to "almost faint on the runway. That's when I knew I had to change the way I ate." The triumph of her commitment to a healthy lifestyle is evidenced by her flawless appearance and overwhelming success. Beauty Inside and Out is hip, colorful, fun, and easy to read. It's great information for anyone but particularly makes the perfect gift for that young lady in your family who can't wait to be all grown-up.



Empowerment
Black On Black Love
Self-Love
Community & Personal Affirmation
Celebrating Our Way Of Loving
In Dialogue
In Communion



TM *The SGL symbol

BWX

Black Womyn's Xchange

Black Same-Gender-Loving (SGL) Sistahs,
Loving Themselves In Their Own Image

BWX gathers weekly, 7:00 p.m. at the AMASSI Health, Wellness and
Cultural Affirmation Center in Los Angeles
For More Information Call 310.419.1969
Ask for Habiba

new for HIV

I AM HERE

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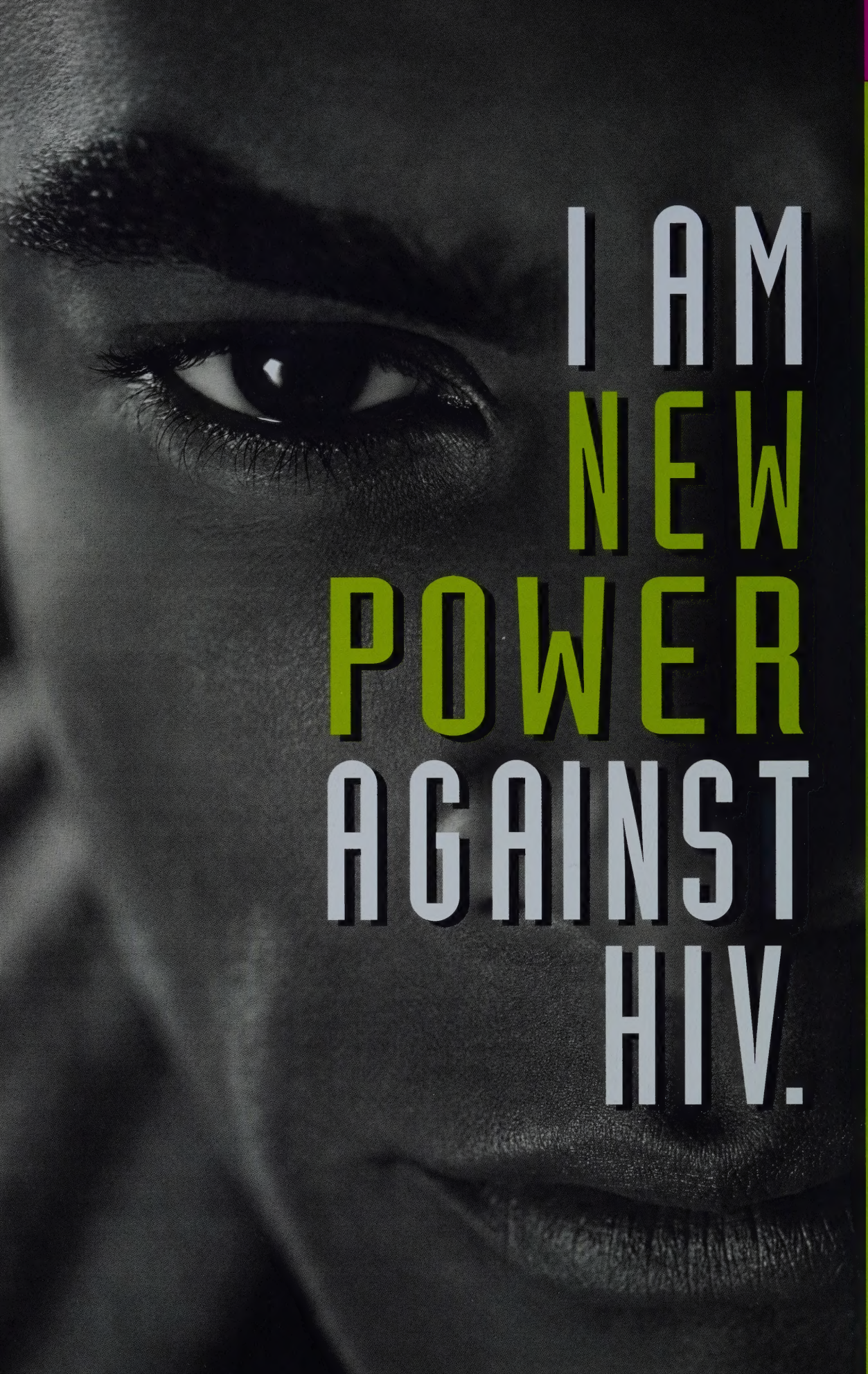
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Talk to your healthcare professional about ZIAGEN. Or call 1-888-TALK-2-GW (1-888-825-5249).

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Ziagen™

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I drive down viral load

Most people who took ZIAGEN with two other nucleoside analogues as their first combination regimen achieved undetectable viral load through 16 weeks.* ZIAGEN does not cure HIV infection/AIDS or prevent passing HIV to others. It's not known whether taking ZIAGEN will slow the progress of HIV disease or help you live longer.

I am two pills a day, with or without food

The easy dosing of ZIAGEN—just one tablet in the morning and one at night, with or without food—simplifies your combination therapy.

I give you new treatment options

ZIAGEN is powerful enough to achieve undetectable viral load when used in initial combination therapy*—for example, ZIAGEN + COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg) Tablets—and may preserve future treatment options. ZIAGEN can be effective in patients who have used anti-HIV drugs before, but the effects are less.

Important safety information

About 5% of patients (5 in 100) who take ZIAGEN have a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) that may result in death. IF YOU HAVE SKIN RASH OR TWO OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING SETS OF SYMPTOMS, STOP TAKING ZIAGEN AND CALL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY: fever, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain, severe tiredness, achiness, or generally ill feeling. A written list of these symptoms is on the Warning Card and Medication Guide provided by your pharmacist. You should carry the Warning Card with you.

If you must stop treatment with ZIAGEN because you have had this serious reaction, NEVER TAKE ZIAGEN AGAIN. If you take ZIAGEN again after you have had this serious reaction, WITHIN HOURS you may experience LIFE-THREATENING symptoms that may include LOWERING OF YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE OR DEATH.

A buildup of lactic acid and an enlarged liver, including fatal cases, have been reported rarely with HIV drugs of this type.

Most side effects were mild to moderate; the most common side effects were nausea, vomiting, malaise or fatigue, headache, diarrhea, and loss of appetite. Most of these side effects did not cause people to stop taking ZIAGEN.

*71% (62/87) of patients taking ZIAGEN with lamivudine + zidovudine in this clinical trial had viral load undetectable below 400 copies/mL using the Roche Amplicor HIV-1 MONITOR® Test.

Please see important information for ZIAGEN and COMBIVIR on adjacent pages.

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www.ZIAGEN.com

Glaxo Wellcome HIV
A division of Glaxo Wellcome Inc.
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
Web site: www.glaxowellcome.com

MEDICATION GUIDE

ZIAGEN™ (z-EYE-uh-jen) (abacavir sulfate) Tablets and Oral Solution

Established name: abacavir (uh-BACK-ah-veer) sulfate tablets and oral solution

In order to take Ziagen safely, you should read all of the information in this Medication Guide each time you fill your prescription for Ziagen.

What is the most important information I should know about Ziagen?

About 5% of patients (5 in 100) who take Ziagen have a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) **that may result in death.** If you have **skin rash** or two or more of the following sets of symptoms, you may be having this kind of reaction:

- **fever**
- **nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain**
- **severe tiredness, achiness, or generally ill feeling**

A written list of these symptoms is on the Warning Card provided by your pharmacist. You should carry this Warning Card with you. **IF YOU NOTICE THESE SYMPTOMS WHILE TAKING ZIAGEN, STOP TAKING ZIAGEN AND CALL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY.**

If you must stop treatment with Ziagen because you have had this serious reaction, **NEVER TAKE ZIAGEN AGAIN**. If you take Ziagen again after you have had this serious reaction, **WITHIN HOURS** you may experience **LIFE-THREATENING** symptoms that may include **LOWERING OF YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE OR DEATH**.

Ziagen can have other serious side effects. Be sure to read "What are the possible side effects of Ziagen?" in the section to the right.

What is Ziagen?

Ziagen is a medication used to treat HIV infection. Ziagen is taken by mouth as a tablet or a strawberry-banana flavored liquid. It belongs to a class of anti-HIV medicines called nucleoside analogue reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs). Ziagen is only proven to work when taken in combination with other anti-HIV medications. When used in combination with these other medications, Ziagen helps lower the amount of HIV found in your blood and keep your immune system as healthy as possible so that it can help fight infection. However, Ziagen does not have these effects in all patients.

Ziagen does not cure HIV infection or AIDS. At this time, there is no evidence that Ziagen will help you live longer or have fewer of the medical problems that are associated with HIV infection or AIDS. Because of this, you must be sure to be seen regularly by your health care provider.

Who should not take Ziagen?

Do not take Ziagen if you have ever had a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) to Ziagen. In such cases, you should return all of your unused Ziagen to your doctor or pharmacist for proper disposal.

How should I take Ziagen?

Take Ziagen exactly as your doctor prescribes it.

The usual dosage for adults (at least 16 years of age) is one 300-mg tablet twice a day.

Adolescents and children from 3 months to 16 years of age can also take Ziagen™ (abacavir sulfate) Tablets and Oral Solution. Your doctor will tell you if the oral solution or tablet is best for your child.

Also, your child's doctor will decide the right dose based on your child's weight and age. Ziagen has not been studied in children under 3 months of age.

Ziagen can be taken with food or on an empty stomach.

To help make sure that your anti-HIV therapy is as effective as it can be, be very careful to take all of your medication exactly as your doctor prescribed it and do not skip any doses.

If you miss a dose of Ziagen, take the missed dose immediately. Then, take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time.

When your supply of Ziagen and other anti-HIV drugs starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. It is very important that you take anti-HIV drugs as prescribed by your doctor because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if one or more of the drugs is stopped, even for a short time.

What should I avoid while taking Ziagen?

Ziagen has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination. Continue to practice safe sex while using Ziagen. Do not use or share dirty needles.

Talk to your doctor if you are pregnant or if you become pregnant while taking Ziagen. Ziagen has not been studied in pregnant women and the risk to the unborn child is not known.

Mothers with HIV should not breastfeed their infants because HIV in the breast milk can be passed to the infant.

What are the possible or reasonably likely side effects of Ziagen?

Some people have had a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) to Ziagen, which can be fatal. Instructions on how to recognize a possible reaction, as well as what to do if such a reaction is suspected, are discussed in the section "What is the most important information I should know about Ziagen?"

The class of medicines to which Ziagen belongs (NRTIs) can cause a condition called lactic acidosis, together with an enlarged liver. In some cases, this condition can be fatal. Women are more likely than men to experience this rare but serious side effect.

Ziagen can cause other side effects. In studies, the most common side effects with Ziagen were nausea, vomiting, malaise or fatigue, headache, diarrhea, and loss of appetite. Most of these side effects did not cause people to stop taking Ziagen. This listing of side effects is not complete. Your doctor or pharmacist can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects with Ziagen. Talk to your doctor promptly about any side effects you have.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Medication Guide. Ask a health care professional about any concerns about Ziagen. Professional labeling is available to your doctor and other health care professionals. If you want more information ask your doctor or pharmacist to let you read the professional labeling.

GlaxoWellcome

Glaxo Wellcome Inc.
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

December 1998 MG - 001

This Medication Guide has been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration.

Patient Information about COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg) Tablets

for HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) Infection
Generic name: lamivudine/zidovudine tablets

Please read this information before you start taking COMBIVIR (pronounced KOM-bĭ-veer). Staying informed will help you to work more closely with your doctor and healthcare team to determine what is best for you. Remember, this information does not take the place of careful discussion with your healthcare provider. You should remain under a doctor's care when using COMBIVIR and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your healthcare provider.

What is COMBIVIR?

COMBIVIR is the brand name of a tablet that combines EPIVIR® Tablets (lamivudine tablets) [3TC®] and RETROVIR® (zidovudine) Tablets [AZT], two drugs which are used to treat HIV (human immunodeficiency virus). HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome).

How does COMBIVIR work?

COMBIVIR is a combination of lamivudine (la-MIV-u-deen) and zidovudine (zī-DOHV-u-deen), two medicines (nucleoside analogues) that slow down the replication of the HIV virus. This can reduce the virus' ability to infect new cells. It may help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 (T) cell count. Lamivudine plus zidovudine when used together can have stronger (synergistic) effects against the virus. COMBIVIR is a convenient way of taking lamivudine and zidovudine. COMBIVIR should usually be taken with other anti-HIV therapy.

Will COMBIVIR work the same as EPIVIR and RETROVIR taken together?

Yes, taking one COMBIVIR Tablet twice a day is the same as taking one EPIVIR 150 mg Tablet twice a day and either two RETROVIR 100 mg Capsules three times a day or one RETROVIR 300 mg Tablet twice a day.

How should I take COMBIVIR?

Take COMBIVIR as your doctor prescribes it. The recommended dose is one COMBIVIR Tablet orally two times a day, with or without food. To help make sure you will benefit from COMBIVIR, you must not skip doses or take "drug holidays."

What should I do if I miss a dose of COMBIVIR?

If you miss a dose by more than 4 hours, wait and then take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time. However, if you miss a dose by less than 4 hours, take your missed dose immediately. Then take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. Do not take more or less than your prescribed dose of COMBIVIR at any one time.

Does COMBIVIR cure HIV infection or AIDS?

No, there is not a cure for HIV infection or AIDS. People taking COMBIVIR may still develop infections or other illnesses associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important to remain under the care of a healthcare provider. Use of lamivudine plus zidovudine has been shown to help patients with HIV infection stay healthy and live longer.

Does COMBIVIR reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

No, COMBIVIR, as well as other HIV medications, has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

Who should not take COMBIVIR?

You should not take COMBIVIR if you have had a serious allergic reaction to either lamivudine or zidovudine.

Do not take COMBIVIR at the same time as EPIVIR or RETROVIR because they also contain lamivudine and zidovudine.

Individual dosing with EPIVIR plus RETROVIR, rather than COMBIVIR, should be considered for:

- A child under 12 years of age.
- A patient who weighs less than 110 pounds.
- Anyone who requires dosage adjustments due to drug side effects or poor kidney function.

What medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my healthcare provider?

Talk to your healthcare provider if:

- You are pregnant or if you become pregnant while taking COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg) Tablets. Ask your doctor about enrolling you in the Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry: 1-800-258-4263.
- You are breastfeeding. Mothers infected with HIV should not breastfeed their infants because HIV is present in breast milk.

Also talk to your doctor about:

- Problems with your blood counts.
- Problems with your muscles.
- Problems with your kidneys.
- Problems with your liver, especially if you have mild or moderate liver disease, such as hepatitis.

Can COMBIVIR be taken with other medications?

Yes, COMBIVIR can be taken with most medications, including most anti-HIV drugs. Be sure to tell your healthcare provider about all medications, over-the-counter or prescription, that you are taking.

What are the possible side effects of COMBIVIR?

Do not rely on this summary alone for information about side effects. Your healthcare provider can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects that may be relevant to you.

The safety of COMBIVIR is not expected to be different from the safety of EPIVIR and RETROVIR given separately.

In clinical studies of lamivudine plus zidovudine, side effects occurring in 5% or more of patients included: muscle and joint pain, headache, nausea, weakness and fatigue, nasal symptoms, cough, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting, neuropathy, trouble sleeping, fever or chills, loss of appetite, dizziness, abdominal pain or cramps, depression, skin rashes, and indigestion.

It's important to know that serious side effects can occur with COMBIVIR, such as a decrease in red and white blood cells and muscle damage. A buildup of lactic acid and an enlarged liver, including fatal cases, have been reported rarely with some HIV drugs, including nucleoside analogues.

For HIV-infected individuals, periodic blood tests are recommended. If certain changes occur in your laboratory results while you are taking COMBIVIR, particularly if you become anemic or if your white blood cell count falls too low, your medication may need to be adjusted; your doctor may prescribe EPIVIR plus RETROVIR separately in place of COMBIVIR.

Tell your doctor promptly about any side effects or other unusual symptoms you may experience.

Other Information

This medication is prescribed for a particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep COMBIVIR and all medicines out of the reach of children.

Like most prescription drugs, lamivudine and zidovudine were required to be tested on animals before they were allowed for human use. In animal studies with doses much higher than those used in humans, zidovudine was associated with vaginal tumors. Your healthcare provider can tell you more about how drugs are tested on animals and what the results of these tests may mean about safety for you.

How should I store COMBIVIR Tablets?

COMBIVIR Tablets may be stored at room temperature and do not require refrigeration.

This provides a summary of information about COMBIVIR. If you have any questions or concerns about COMBIVIR or HIV, talk to your healthcare provider.

Glaxo Wellcome
HIV
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Web site: www.glaxowellcome.com

Debra Cox

Canadian born, Debra Cox, gives it all she's got whenever she's in concert. The emotionally charged diva is the first Canadian R&B artist to ever reach #1 on Billboard's R&B charts. Cox's gospel-infused voice is second to none on her record-breaking single "Nobody's Supposed to be Here" from her album "One Wish" which stayed at #1 for 13 consecutive weeks.

PHOTO BY TINA PAUL

Edward Wilkerson

Fashion Designer & Photographer

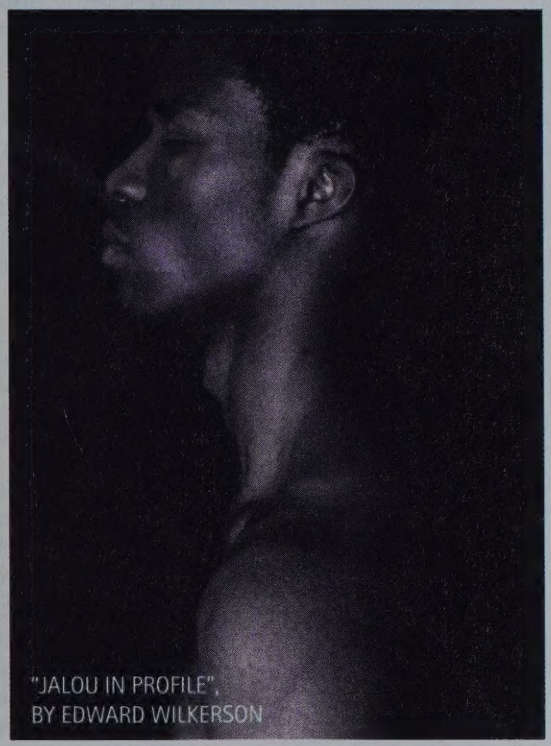
Edward Wilkerson is an artist who lives and breathes his work, literally.

From the classic yet stylized fashion to his provocative photography detailing facets of African life and artistry, Wilkerson has mesmerized anyone who has worn one of his designs or laid eyes upon his photography collections, Tribal Knowledge and Desire.

What began as a career in fashion has evolved into a life's journey for Wilkerson, a journey that would forever change the way he experienced life. In fact, Africa became the place where Edward would truly rediscover himself.

"Since Africa, my sense of color has not been the same after seeing how Mother Nature made grass such a lush color of green and the sensual blue in the sky," says a reminiscing Edward. "The air was so pure, it was a pleasure to breathe. I was so overwhelmed that I wanted to bottle it and bring it back home with me...instead, I have photographs." Welcome to Edward Wilkerson's journey to the visually beautiful.

Although the continent of Africa served as a sanctuary of rebirth for Edward, his formative years were spent in New York City. Influenced by his mother's immaculate sense of style, Edward decided at the age of ten that he wanted to become a fashion designer. While other children in his Queens neighborhood played outside, Edward surrounded himself with delicate and colorful fabrics, studied how clothing defined the body, and dreamed of one day designing couture clothing for some of the world's most stylish women.



"JALOU IN PROFILE", BY EDWARD WILKERSON

Edward graduated from Parsons School of Design and spent three years studying the art of fashion design. In1984, Edward was well on his way to a promising career as a designer with Anne Klein & Co. where he assisted then-senior designers Donna Karan and Louise del Olio. As the high-spending wave of the '80s came to an end and the age of the Supermodel progressed, Edward moved on to the chic design house of developing silhouettes and the direction of the main Calvin Klein collection.

After more than three years with Calvin Klein, it seemed that Edward Wilkerson's career had come full circle, and he accepted the position of designer with Donna Karan for the Donna Karan Collection, which would ultimately produce items that many women all over the world consider necessary pieces of clothing and accessories for their wardrobe. He was living his childhood dream.

While Edward continued to make headlines as senior designer at the Donna Karan Company, he began to feel a creative void. He had always been interested in photography and loved to travel. He soon found a way to combine his two favorite hobbies and in doing so, began to embrace a new career. In 1995, Edward vacationed in Kenya, East Africa and then two years later, traveled to Morocco, North Africa in 1997. Each of these trips inspired him to create an artistically beautiful melange of photographs that blend the body with striking artifacts such as African masks, clothing and jewelry. "In doing this, I am able to capture the very essence of the land's people, paying tribute to them because they have such a keen sense of style and a lot of creative license that is very unique to them," explains Wilkerson.

- Genita Ingram

"SINCE AFRICA, MY SENSE OF COLOR HAS NOT BEEN THE SAME AFTER SEEING HOW MOTHER NATURE MADE GRASS SUCH A LUSH COLOR OF GREEN AND THE SENSUAL BLUE IN THE SKY"

BY DON CHARLES

TERMS OF ENDEARMENT

I wish I could say it was always nice to hear gay people in the media, but if I said that, I'd be lying. Here's an example. Last Sunday, I tuned into my local Pacific radio station to catch an interview with a gay activist/journalist. His name really isn't important. One of the first questions the interviewer asked was why this particular activist indulged in the frequent use of the words "faggot" and "queer" in print.

His answer went something like this: "I LOVE to use those words with my gay friends. My straight friends, too. Even my brother calls me 'faggot!' It's all about reclaiming these words that have been used to hurt us over the years. I know there was some controversy within the gay community a few years back about using the words "queer" and "faggot," but that's all over now! We queer activists won that battle."

Say WHAT? I almost broke my leg lunging for my radio dial. I couldn't switch that joker off fast enough! The brazen arrogance of this man, to presume he could decide for me how I'm to be addressed.... To get on national radio airwaves and all but encourage people to slur me, to reduce me to a stereotype. I had no intention of letting this imitation of a journalist spoil my Sunday afternoon. But if you listen to or read gay media to any extent, you know how prevalent his kind of attitude has become. From comedian Scott Thompson belting out a chorus of "Faggots On Parade," to comic strips with names like "Dykes To Watch Out For," to endless chants of "We're here, we're queer, get used to it," you can hardly escape it.

Never mind the fundamentalists, honey...it's our own kind we have to worry about. There's nothing like a healthy dose of shared self-hatred to give you that heartwarming "community" kind of feeling. NOT!

If you're African American, you certainly don't have to wait for a white gay radical to make this language issue real for you. Ensconce yourself in almost any gathering of black people for a given length of time, and you won't fail to hear the "n" word come up in casual conversation.

"Nigga" this. "Nigga" that. "Nigga" so high and wide, you can't get over or around it. "Child, wasn't that a *fine* nigga?" Black comedians and rap artists embraced the word years ago, and if truth be told, they've done much to popularize its use -and not just among black people. If you find this usage offensive, as I do, it's almost enough to make you seek out all-white environments. Sure, white people use the "n" word, too...hell, they invented it ...but at least most of the time, they have the common courtesy not to use it within your earshot.

I ask myself why oppressed peoples become so fiercely attached to words that were created by others to denigrate and demean them. A lot of people seem to harbor this bogus belief that the use of slurs within oppressed groups amounts to nothing more than expressions of ENDEARMENT. I ain't hardly down with that logic! I'll never forget hearing the topic of racial slurs discussed on a national black call-in show a few years ago; the honesty of one female caller left a lasting impression on me. She stated that on those occasions when she felt compelled to call her husband a "nigga," she seldom—if ever—felt "endeared" to him! HELLO...

By the time I was thirteen years of age, I pretty much knew all the nasty words. And every one of those fun four-letter exclamations that you can't find in your dictionary have fallen from my lips at various times over the years. (Hey, I can be as politically incorrect as the next person!) However, there are a handful of racist and homophobic terms I've never been, and will never be, comfortable using. I won't say I don't slip up sometimes, but I do consciously avoid saying them. I can't forget that words like "nigga," "faggot," and "dyke" are stained with blood and tears.

A LOT OF PEOPLE SEEM TO HARBOR THIS BOGUS BELIEF THAT THE USE OF SLURS WITHIN OPPRESSED GROUPS AMOUNTS TO NOTHING MORE THAN EXPRESSIONS OF ENDEARMENT. I AIN'T HARDLY DOWN WITH THAT LOGIC!

These words robbed children of their innocence, and elders of their dignity. Not to mention those who were robbed of their livelihood, and often, their very lives. It bears remembering that the "n" word was ringing in the ears of Abner Louima as his rectum was being ripped apart by racist New York cops. And five will get you ten that "faggot" and "queer" were two of the last words the late Matthew Shepherd heard as his murderers were crucifying him on a Wyoming fence.

We can't "reclaim" these slurs! They were never ours to begin with.

They were imposed on us by wicked people who used us to further dishonorable social agendas. Shame on us, we who call ourselves the black and the gay communities, if we can't muster enough creativity to replace their slurs with words of our own invention; words that convey pride, love, and solidarity without a hint of self-hatred. How hard can it be?

Eric Benet

Live for today. Sounds like good advice, but for Eric Benet, today isn't enough. "I like the idea of making music that transcends time and history," says the soft-spoken artist. "Ella Fitzgerald, Nat King Cole; people will be playing their records a hundred years from now. I hope to make music like that."

That might be a tall order for most young artists, but with Eric Benet, the smart money is on him to make it. For with A Day In The Life, his new Warner Bros. Records album, Eric instantly vaults to the front ranks of innovative singer/songwriters.

In the wake of his 1996 debut, True to Myself, Eric toured the world, making friends and fans wherever he went. When he returned home to Milwaukee last year, he set to work, writing scores of new songs and teaming up with a handful of equally talented writers and producers. "I didn't go into this thinking I had to do everything better," he says. Grounded in classic R & B, A Day In The Life was largely inspired by Eric's real life experience. "I keep a journal," he says. "The album title came from rereading passages in my diary. As a songwriter, I just opened myself up to whatever came out of my heart."

The wistful ballad "Come As You Are" is perhaps the emotional centerpiece of the album, while "Love the Hurt Away," which features the gospel-influenced organ mastery of Demonte Posey, reflects Eric's roots. "It's got that old ghetto-gospel-blues thing," he says. "We tried to channel Al Green, Bobby Bland, and Curtis Mayfield on that one." The same could be said for "Ghetto Girl," featuring Me'Shell Ndege Ocello, a song that reflects Eric's hometown pride. Given his burgeoning career, you'd think he would move to New York or L.A., but he prefers to remain grounded in Milwaukee. "When people hear I'm from Milwaukee, the first thing they say, after mentioning 'Happy Days' is, 'I didn't know there were any Black people there.' Well, this town has a strong African American community, and I was raised right in the middle of it."

Eric's debut album, True to Yourself, caught the public's attention in 1996, and since then Eric has toured the U.S. with Erykah Badu. With the release of A Day In The Life, Eric is revving up the touring machine once again for a busy 1999.

Cruzan in St. Croix

So, you've planned that especially romantic vacation with that special someone. Sounds like a fabulous idea, but this can be a somewhat complex task for same sex partners. Have you ever experienced any of the following? When checking into a hotel, have you ever received looks when your partner and you request a king-size bed? While having the romantic dinner of a lifetime in a fine restaurant with an ocean view, have you ever had this uncontrollable urge to kiss your lover passionately but feel like you can't? Or what about that walk along the beach—why not hold hands?

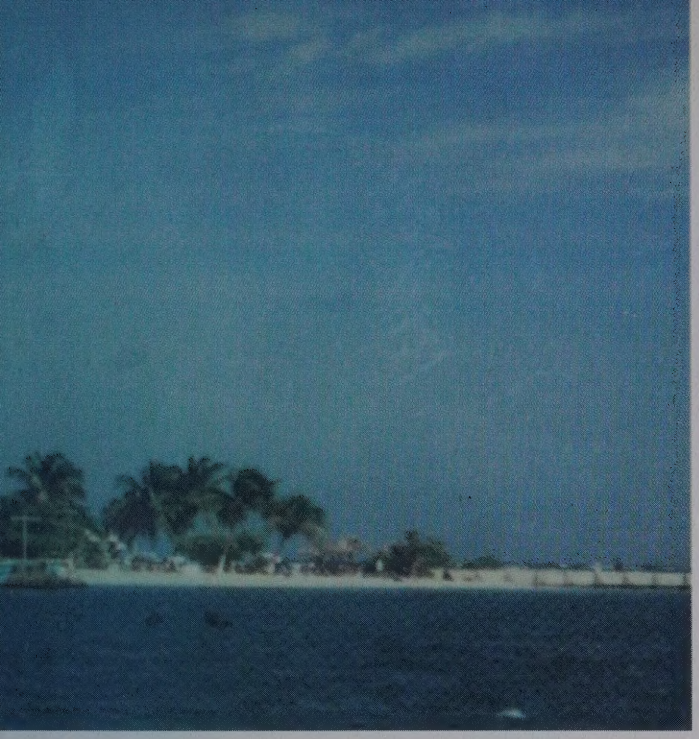
A lot of us have "lived on the edge" in these instances and have not given a second thought about being openly affectionate with our loved ones regardless of the sometimes dangerous circumstances. However, most of us tend to play it safe. Well, here's a suggestion: instead of vacationing in places with a predominately straight atmosphere, how about considering a paradise with something different—a destination that actually welcomes members of the gay and lesbian community. One such Caribbean island that has fostered a more "tolerant" attitude toward homosexuality is St. Croix.

Initially, the island was inhabited by the Ciboney tribe by way of South America. Afterwards, the Tainos/Arawaks came, then the Caribs, around 1425. Columbus arrived in 1493, a year after his infamous appearance in the U.S. His visit sparked the first conflict between Natives and Europeans that actually resulted in fatalities on both sides, as his crew attacked the members of the tribe as they came to welcome them in their canoes. There is a National Park commemorating the visit by Columbus. At that time, the island was named "Santa Cruz" by Spain. Nearly two hundred years later, the island was eventually "settled" by both the English and Dutch.

For the next three hundred years, Spain, England, the Netherlands, and France (who obviously named the island St. Croix) were among the seven nations that ruled there. Lucrative profits were made from sugar production and cotton among other natural resources. Today, abandoned sugar mills and stately plantations remain as stark reminders of that time in history. Despite this significant period, St. Croix has retained its West Indian cultural heritage and beauty which gives us all reason to visit this magnificent tropical gem.

The largest of the United States Virgin Islands (second to St. Thomas, then St. John), St. Croix measures about 28 miles long and 7 miles wide of immaculate beaches, tropical rain forests, and desert vegetation. The average temperature is close to eighty degrees Fahrenheit, nearing ninety in the summer and rarely going below seventy in the winter. The population is in the vicinity of 100,000. The currency is the U.S. dollar and English is spoken here, along with a delicious Caribbean patois. As I mentioned before, St. Croix has a tolerant attitude about our presence, but don't expect rainbow flags waving everywhere and a pumping gay night life. The island is geared toward simply chillin'. Life is easygoing. Being gay is just matter-of-fact. The gay continentals (immigrants of European descent) co-exist with the native (the brothers and sisters) Cruzans, who, due to cultural reasons, are more closeted.

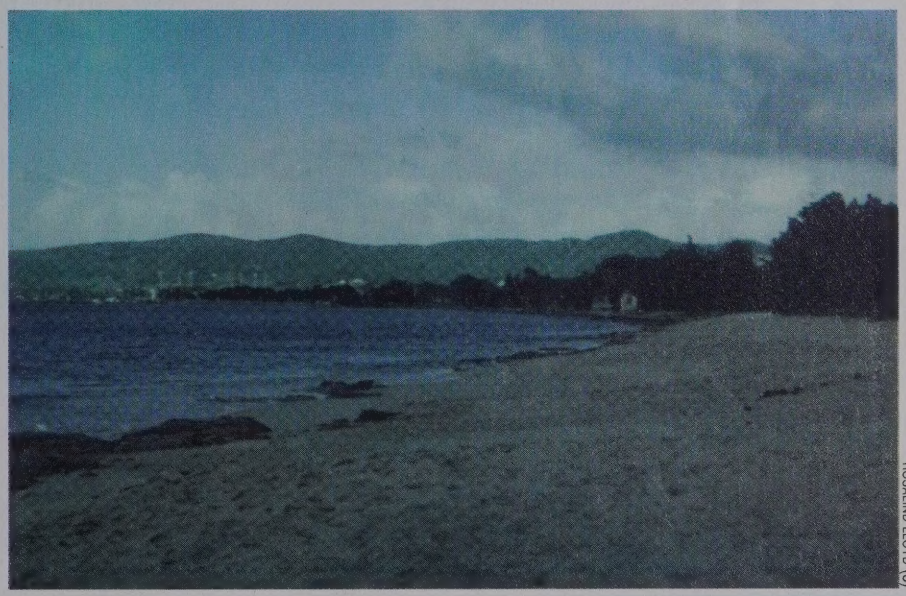
St. Croix is divided by two main



INSTEAD OF VACATIONING IN PLACES WITH A PREDOMINATELY STRAIGHT ATMOSPHERE, HOW ABOUT CONSIDERING A PARADISE WITH SOMETHING DIFFERENT—A DESTINATION THAT ACTUALLY WELCOMES MEMBERS OF THE GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY.

towns. Frediksted is known for its rain forests, botanical gardens, and the port where cruise ships dock. Christiansted is recognized for its attention to historical detail noted in its 18th century architecture, along with its array of hotels, shops and restaurants. For nature and water sports enthusiasts, I strongly suggest a trip to Buck Island. A national monument located just a short ride away from Christiansted, here is where I experienced some of the most exquisite snorkeling ever. Shortly after diving into the sea from the tour boat, we were greeted by a friendly manta ray in four feet of water!

There are many tours that offer decent snorkeling and scuba diving excursions, glass-bottom boat trips, nighttime cruises, parasailing and game fishing. For those not into the water sport thing, there is, of course, shopping, horseback riding along the beach, bike tours, tennis, golf—the list goes on. And there is, of course, my favorite thing to do: relaxing on the beach or by the pool, catching some rays while holding the hand of my boo at a resort that caters to the "family." The Cormorant Beach Club & Hotel is set on 12 acres, 3 miles west of Christensted. This lovely beachfront property boasts a prime snorkeling reef, a fresh-water pool, two tennis courts and an open air sea view lounge and restaurant. Arthur and Gregory, a committed couple of nineteen years, market their resort to Gay and Lesbian couples "who like to honeymoon every time they travel," but trust, singles or a bunch of friends can have a mad time there. It's a great place to socialize with gay and lesbian Cruzans.



ROSALIND LLOYD (3)

So what are you waiting for? Make travel plans for that honeymoon right now! Request that king-size bed with your suite, and don't forget to tell them Ros sent ya!

by Rosalind Christine Lloyd

Drug holidays:
One vacation you don't want to take

It sounds so good

Give your body a rest, a chance to recover from all those tough meds and their side effects. Just skip a dose, or a day, or a weekend...

The truth?

You're doing the virus a big favor. Suddenly, without your HIV drugs, there's nothing to stop the virus from making billions of copies of itself. And each and every new copy gives HIV a chance to change, to find a new form that could be resistant to the drugs you're taking.

In other words, when you go back to your regular medication schedule, there's a chance the drugs may no longer work as well.

HIV drugs should be taken on time, every day. That's the only way known to keep enough of each drug in your blood at all times to fight HIV.

The bottom line:

Why help the virus hurt you? Next time you're tempted to skip a dose or two, think again...or else a "minor" drug holiday could end up being a serious threat to your health. Don't let your vacation put HIV back to work.

Call 1-800 760-5912

Be Smart!

For more information on drug holidays and other helpful information on managing HIV

call 1-800-760-5912
or see www.treathiv.com

PROVEN POWER for HIV

Simplify your combination therapy

Combivir can make it easier for you to stay on your medication schedule

- *Two proven HIV therapies are in one tablet*
- *One Combivir Tablet morning and night, with or without food*
- *Helps you live a longer, healthier life[1,2]*

The safety profile of Combivir should be the same as that of Epivir® (lamivudine; 3TC®) + Retrovir® (zidovudine; AZT). The most frequent side effects associated with Epivir + Retrovir taken together are headache, upset stomach, malaise or fatigue, and runny nose. A buildup of lactic acid and an enlarged liver, including fatal cases, have been reported rarely with some HIV drugs, including AZT and 3TC.

Ask your healthcare professional about

Combivir®

lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg

ONE TABLET TWICE A DAY

Smarter Together

Call 1•800•760•5912 for more information or see www.treathiv.com

References: 1. CAESAR Coordinating Committee. Randomised trial of addition of lamivudine or lamivudine plus loviride to zidovudine-containing regimens for patients with HIV-1 infection: the CAESAR trial. *Lancet.* 1997; 349:1413-1421. **2.** Hammer SM, Squires KE, Hughes MD, et al. A controlled trial of two nucleoside analogues plus indinavir in persons with human immunodeficiency virus infection and CD4 cell counts of 200 per cubic millimeter or less. *N Engl J Med.* 1997;337:725-733.

Please see brief summary for Combivir on adjacent page.

Glaxo Wellcome HIV
A division of Glaxo Wellcome Inc.
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
Web site: www.glaxowellcome.com

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BRIEF SUMMARY

COMBIVIR® Tablets (lamivudine/zidovudine tablets)

The following is a brief summary only; see full prescribing information for complete product information.

WARNING: ZIDOVUDINE, ONE OF THE TWO ACTIVE INGREDIENTS IN COMBIVIR, HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH HEMATOLOGIC TOXICITY INCLUDING NEUTROPENIA AND SEVERE ANEMIA, PARTICULARLY IN PATIENTS WITH ADVANCED HIV DISEASE (SEE WARNINGS). PROLONGED USE OF ZIDOVUDINE HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH SYMPTOMATIC MYOPATHY.

LACTIC ACIDOSIS AND SEVERE HEPATOMEGALY WITH STEATOSIS, INCLUDING FATAL CASES, HAVE BEEN REPORTED WITH THE USE OF ANTIRETROVIRAL NUCLEOSIDE ANALOGUES ALONE OR IN COMBINATION, INCLUDING ZIDOVUDINE AND LAMIVUDINE (SEE WARNINGS).

INDICATIONS AND USAGE: COMBIVIR is indicated for the treatment of HIV infection.

Description of Clinical Studies: ***COMBIVIR:*** There have been no clinical trials conducted with COMBIVIR. See CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY for information about bioequivalence. One COMBIVIR Tablet given twice a day is an alternative regimen to EPIVIR Tablets 150 mg twice a day plus RETROVIR 600 mg per day in divided doses.

Lamivudine Plus Zidovudine: The NUCB3007 (CAESAR) study was conducted using EPIVIR 150-mg Tablets (150 mg b.i.d.) and RETROVIR 100-mg Capsules (2 x 100 mg t.i.d.). CAESAR was a multicenter, double-blind, placebo-controlled study comparing continued current therapy [zidovudine alone (62% of patients) or zidovudine with didanosine or zalcitabine (38% of patients)] to the addition of EPIVIR or EPIVIR plus an investigational non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor, randomized 1:2:1. A total of 1816 HIV-infected adults with 25 to 250 (median 122) CD4 cells/mm³ at baseline were enrolled: median age was 36 years, 87% were male, 84% were nucleoside-experienced, and 16% were therapy-naive. The median duration on study was 12 months. Results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of Patients (%) With At Least One HIV Disease-Progression Event or Death

Endpoint	Current Therapy (n = 460)	EPIVIR plus Current Therapy (n = 896)	EPIVIR plus a NNRTI* plus Current Therapy (n = 460)
HIV progression or death	90 (19.6%)	86 (9.6%)	41 (8.9%)
Death	27 (5.9%)	23 (2.6%)	14 (3.0%)

*An investigational non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor not approved in the United States.

CONTRAINDICATIONS: COMBIVIR Tablets are contraindicated in patients with previously demonstrated clinically significant hypersensitivity to any of the components of the product.

WARNINGS: COMBIVIR is a fixed-dose combination of lamivudine and zidovudine. Ordinarily, COMBIVIR should not be administered concomitantly with either lamivudine or zidovudine.

The complete prescribing information for all agents being considered for use with COMBIVIR should be consulted before combination therapy with COMBIVIR is initiated.

Bone Marrow Suppression: COMBIVIR should be used with caution in patients who have bone marrow compromise evidenced by granulocyte count <1000 cells/mm³ or hemoglobin <9.5 g/dL (see ADVERSE REACTIONS).

Frequent blood counts are strongly recommended in patients with advanced HIV disease who are treated with COMBIVIR. For HIV-infected individuals and patients with asymptomatic or early HIV disease, periodic blood counts are recommended.

Lactic Acidosis/Severe Hepatomegaly with Steatosis: Lactic acidosis and severe hepatomegaly with steatosis, including fatal cases, have been reported with the use of antiretroviral nucleoside analogues alone or in combination, including zidovudine and lamivudine. A majority of these cases have been in women. Caution should be exercised when administering COMBIVIR to any patient, and particularly to those with known risk factors for liver disease. Treatment with COMBIVIR should be suspended in any patient who develops clinical or laboratory findings suggestive of lactic acidosis or hepatotoxicity.

Myopathy: Myopathy and myositis, with pathological changes similar to that produced by HIV disease, have been associated with prolonged use of zidovudine, and therefore may occur with therapy with COMBIVIR.

PRECAUTIONS:

General: Reduction of doses of lamivudine is recommended for patients with low body weight (less than 50 kg or 110 lb); therefore patients with low body weight should not receive COMBIVIR.

Patients With HIV and Hepatitis B Virus Coinfection: In clinical trials and postmarketing experience, some patients with HIV infection who have chronic liver disease due to hepatitis B virus infection experienced clinical or laboratory evidence of recurrent hepatitis upon discontinuation of lamivudine. Consequences may be more severe in patients with decompensated liver disease.

Patients With Impaired Renal Function: Reduction of the dosages of lamivudine and zidovudine is recommended for patients with impaired renal function. Patients with creatinine clearance ≤50 mL/min should not receive COMBIVIR.

Information for Patients: COMBIVIR is not a cure for HIV infection and patients may continue to experience illnesses associated with HIV infection, including opportunistic infections. Patients should be advised that the use of COMBIVIR has not been shown to reduce the risk of transmission of HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination. Patients should be informed that the major toxicities of COMBIVIR are neutropenia and/or anemia. They should be told of the extreme importance of having their blood counts followed closely while on therapy, especially for patients with advanced HIV disease. Patients should be advised of the importance of taking COMBIVIR as it is prescribed.

Drug Interactions: Coadministration of ganciclovir, interferon-alpha, and other bone marrow suppressive or cytotoxic agents may increase the hematologic toxicity of zidovudine (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY section of full prescribing information).

Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, and Impairment of Fertility: ***Carcinogenicity:***

Lamivudine: Lamivudine long-term carcinogenicity studies in mice and rats showed no evidence of carcinogenic potential at exposures up to 10 times (mice) and 58 times (rats) those observed in humans at the recommended therapeutic dose.

Zidovudine: Zidovudine was administered orally at three dosage levels to separate groups of mice and rats (60 females and 60 males in each group). Initial single daily doses were 30, 60, and 120 mg/kg per day in mice and 80, 220, and 600 mg/kg per day in rats. The doses in mice were reduced to 20, 30, and 40 mg/kg per day after day 90 because of treatment-related anemia, whereas in rats only the high dose was reduced to 450 mg/kg per day on day 91 and then to 300 mg/kg per day on day 279.

In mice, seven late-appearing (after 19 months) vaginal neoplasms (five nonmetastasizing squamous cell carcinomas, one squamous cell papilloma, and one squamous polyp) occurred in animals given the highest dose. One late-appearing squamous cell papilloma occurred in the vagina of a middle-dose animal. No vaginal tumors were found at the lowest dose.

In rats, two late-appearing (after 20 months), nonmetastasizing vaginal squamous cell carcinomas occurred in animals given the highest dose. No vaginal tumors occurred at the low or middle dose in rats. No other drug-related tumors were observed in either sex of either species.

At doses that produced tumors in mice and rats, the estimated drug exposure (as measured by AUC) was approximately three times (mouse) and 24 times (rat) the estimated human exposure at the recommended therapeutic dose of 100 mg every 4 hours.

Two transplacental carcinogenicity studies were conducted in mice. One study administered zidovudine at doses of 20 mg/kg per day or 40 mg/kg per day from gestation day 10 through parturition and lactation with dosing continuing in offspring for 24 months postnatally. The doses of zidovudine employed in this study produced zidovudine exposures approximately three times the estimated human exposure at recommended doses. After 24 months, at the highest dose, an increase in incidence of vaginal tumors was noted with no increase in tumors in the liver or lung or any other organ in either gender. These findings are consistent with results of the standard oral carcinogenicity study in mice, as described earlier. A second study administered zidovudine at maximum tolerated doses of 12.5 mg/day or 25 mg/day (~1000 mg/kg nonpregnant body weight or ~450 mg/kg of term body weight) to pregnant mice from days 12 through 18 of gestation. There was an increase in the number of tumors in the lung, liver, and female reproductive tracts in the offspring of mice receiving the higher dose level of zidovudine.

It is not known how predictive the results of rodent carcinogenicity studies may be for humans.

Mutagenicity: Lamivudine: Lamivudine was negative in a microbial mutagenicity screen, in an in vitro cell transformation assay, in a rat micronucleus test, in a rat bone marrow cytogenetic assay, and in an assay for unscheduled DNA synthesis in rat liver. It was mutagenic in a L5178Y/TK$^{+/-}$ mouse lymphoma assay and clastogenic in a cytogenetic assay using cultured human lymphocytes.

Zidovudine: Zidovudine was mutagenic in a L5178Y/TK$^{+/-}$ mouse lymphoma assay, positive in an in vitro cell transformation assay, clastogenic in a cytogenetic assay using cultured human lymphocytes, and positive in mouse and rat micronucleus tests after repeated doses. It was negative in a cytogenetic study in rats given a single dose.

Impairment of Fertility: Lamivudine: In a study of reproductive performance, lamivudine, administered to male and female rats at doses up to 130 times the usual adult dose based on body surface area considerations, revealed no evidence of impaired fertility (judged by conception rates) and no effect on the survival, growth, and development to weaning of the offspring.

Zidovudine: Zidovudine, administered to male and female rats at doses up to 7 times the usual adult dose based on body surface area considerations, had no effect on fertility judged by conception rates.

Pregnancy: Pregnancy Category C.

COMBIVIR: There are no adequate and well-controlled studies of COMBIVIR in pregnant women. Reproduction studies with lamivudine and zidovudine have been performed in animals (see Lamivudine and Zidovudine sections below). COMBIVIR should be used during pregnancy only if the potential benefits outweigh the risks.

Lamivudine: Reproduction studies with orally administered lamivudine have been performed in rats and rabbits at 130 and 60 times, respectively, the usual adult dose (based on relative body surface area) and have revealed no evidence of teratogenicity. Some evidence of early embryolethality was seen in the rabbit at doses similar to those produced by the usual adult dose and higher, but there was no indication of this effect in the rat at orally administered doses up to 130 times the usual adult dose. Studies in pregnant rats and rabbits showed that lamivudine is transferred to the fetus through the placenta.

Zidovudine: Reproduction studies with orally administered zidovudine in the rat and in the rabbit at doses up to 500 mg/kg per day revealed no evidence of teratogenicity with zidovudine. Zidovudine treatment resulted in embryo/fetal toxicity as evidenced by an increase in the incidence of fetal resorptions in rats given 150 or 450 mg/kg per day and rabbits given 500 mg/kg per day. The doses used in the teratology studies resulted in peak zidovudine plasma concentrations (after one-half of the daily dose) in rats 66 to 226 times, and in rabbits 12 to 87 times, mean steady-state peak human plasma concentrations (after one-sixth of the daily dose) achieved with the recommended daily dose (100 mg every 4 hours). In an additional teratology study in rats, a dose of 3000 mg/kg per day (very near the oral median lethal dose in rats of 3683 mg/kg) caused marked maternal toxicity and an increase in the incidence of fetal malformations. This dose resulted in peak zidovudine plasma concentrations 350 times peak human plasma concentrations. No evidence of teratogenicity was seen in this experiment at doses of 600 mg/kg per day or less. Two rodent carcinogenicity studies were conducted (see Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility).

Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry: To monitor maternal-fetal outcomes of pregnant women exposed to COMBIVIR® Tablets (lamivudine/zidovudine tablets) and other antiretroviral agents, an Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry has been established. Physicians are encouraged to register patients by calling 1-800-258-4263.

Nursing Mothers: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that HIV-infected mothers not breastfeed their infants to avoid risking postnatal transmission of HIV infection.

COMBIVIR: Zidovudine is excreted in breast milk (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY: Pharmacokinetics: Nursing Mothers subsection of full prescribing information); however, no data are available on COMBIVIR or lamivudine. Therefore, there is a potential for adverse effects in nursing infants. **Mothers should be instructed not to breastfeed if they are receiving COMBIVIR.**

Pediatric Use: COMBIVIR should not be administered to pediatric patients less than 12 years of age because it is a fixed-dose combination that cannot be adjusted for this patient population.

ADVERSE REACTIONS:

Lamivudine Plus Zidovudine Administered As Separate Formulations: In four randomized, controlled trials of EPIVIR 300 mg per day plus RETROVIR 600 mg per day, the following selected clinical and laboratory adverse events were observed (see Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2: Selected Clinical Adverse Events (≥5% Frequency) in Four Controlled Clinical Trials With EPIVIR 300 mg/day and RETROVIR 600 mg/day

Adverse Event		EPIVIR plus RETROVIR (n = 251)
Body as a whole	Headache	35%
	Malaise & fatigue	27%
	Fever or chills	10%
Digestive	Nausea	33%
	Diarrhea	18%
	Nausea & vomiting	13%
	Anorexia and/or decreased appetite	10%
	Abdominal pain	9%
	Abdominal cramps	6%
	Dyspepsia	5%
Nervous system	Neuropathy	12%
	Insomnia & other sleep disorders	11%
	Dizziness	10%
	Depressive disorders	9%
Respiratory	Nasal signs & symptoms	20%
	Cough	18%
Skin	Skin rashes	9%
Musculoskeletal	Musculoskeletal pain	12%
	Myalgia	8%
	Arthralgia	5%

Pancreatitis was observed in three of the 656 adult patients (<0.5%) who received EPIVIR in controlled clinical trials.

Selected laboratory abnormalities observed during therapy are listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Frequencies of Selected Laboratory Abnormalities Among Adults in Four Controlled Clinical Trials of EPIVIR 300 mg/day plus RETROVIR 600 mg/day*

Test (Abnormal Level)	EPIVIR plus RETROVIR % (n)
Neutropenia (ANC<750/mm³)	7.2% (237)
Anemia (Hgb<8.0 g/dL)	2.9% (241)
Thrombocytopenia (platelets<50,000/mm³)	0.4% (240)
ALT (>5.0 x ULN)	3.7% (241)
AST (>5.0 x ULN)	1.7% (241)
Bilirubin (>2.5 x ULN)	0.8% (241)
Amylase (>2.0 x ULN)	4.2% (72)

ULN = Upper limit of normal.
ANC = Absolute neutrophil count.
n = Number of patients assessed.
*Frequencies of these laboratory abnormalities were higher in patients with mild laboratory abnormalities at baseline.

Observed During Clinical Practice: In addition to adverse events reported from clinical trials, the following events have been identified during post-approval use of EPIVIR and/or RETROVIR. Because they are reported voluntarily from a population of unknown size, estimates of frequency cannot be made. These events have been chosen for inclusion due to a combination of their seriousness, frequency of reporting, or potential causal connection to EPIVIR and/or RETROVIR.

Endocrine and Metabolic: Hyperglycemia.

General: Sensitization reactions (including anaphylaxis), vasculitis.

Hepatobiliary Tract and Pancreas: Lactic acidosis and hepatic steatosis (see WARNINGS), pancreatitis.

Musculoskeletal: Muscle weakness with CPK elevation, rhabdomyolysis.

Nervous: Seizures.

Skin: Alopecia, erythema multiforme, Stevens-Johnson syndrome, urticaria.

OVERDOSAGE:

COMBIVIR: There is no known antidote for COMBIVIR.

Lamivudine: One case of an adult ingesting 6 grams of lamivudine was reported; there were no clinical signs or symptoms noted and hematologic tests remained normal. It is not known whether lamivudine can be removed by peritoneal dialysis or hemodialysis.

Zidovudine: Acute overdoses of zidovudine have been reported in pediatric patients and adults. These involved exposures up to 50 grams. The only consistent findings were nausea and vomiting. Other reported occurrences included headache, dizziness, drowsiness, lethargy, confusion, and one report of a grand mal seizure. Hematologic changes were transient. All patients recovered. Hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis appear to have a negligible effect on the removal of zidovudine while elimination of its primary metabolite, GZDV, is enhanced.

DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION: The recommended oral dose of COMBIVIR for adults and adolescents (at least 12 years of age) is one tablet (containing 150 mg of lamivudine and 300 mg of zidovudine) twice daily.

Dose Adjustment: Because it is a fixed-dose combination, COMBIVIR should not be prescribed for patients requiring dosage adjustment such as those with reduced renal function (creatinine clearance ≤50 mL/min), those with low body weight (<50 kg or 110 lb), or those experiencing dose-limiting adverse events.

US Patent Nos. 5,047,407; 4,818,538; 4,828,838; 4,724,232; 4,833,130; and 4,837,208

GlaxoWellcome

Glaxo Wellcome Inc.
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

Lamivudine is manufactured under agreement from Biochem Pharma Inc.
Laval, Quebec, Canada

May 1998/RL-589

1st Annual Black Pride

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JULY 1 - 5, 1999

THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY

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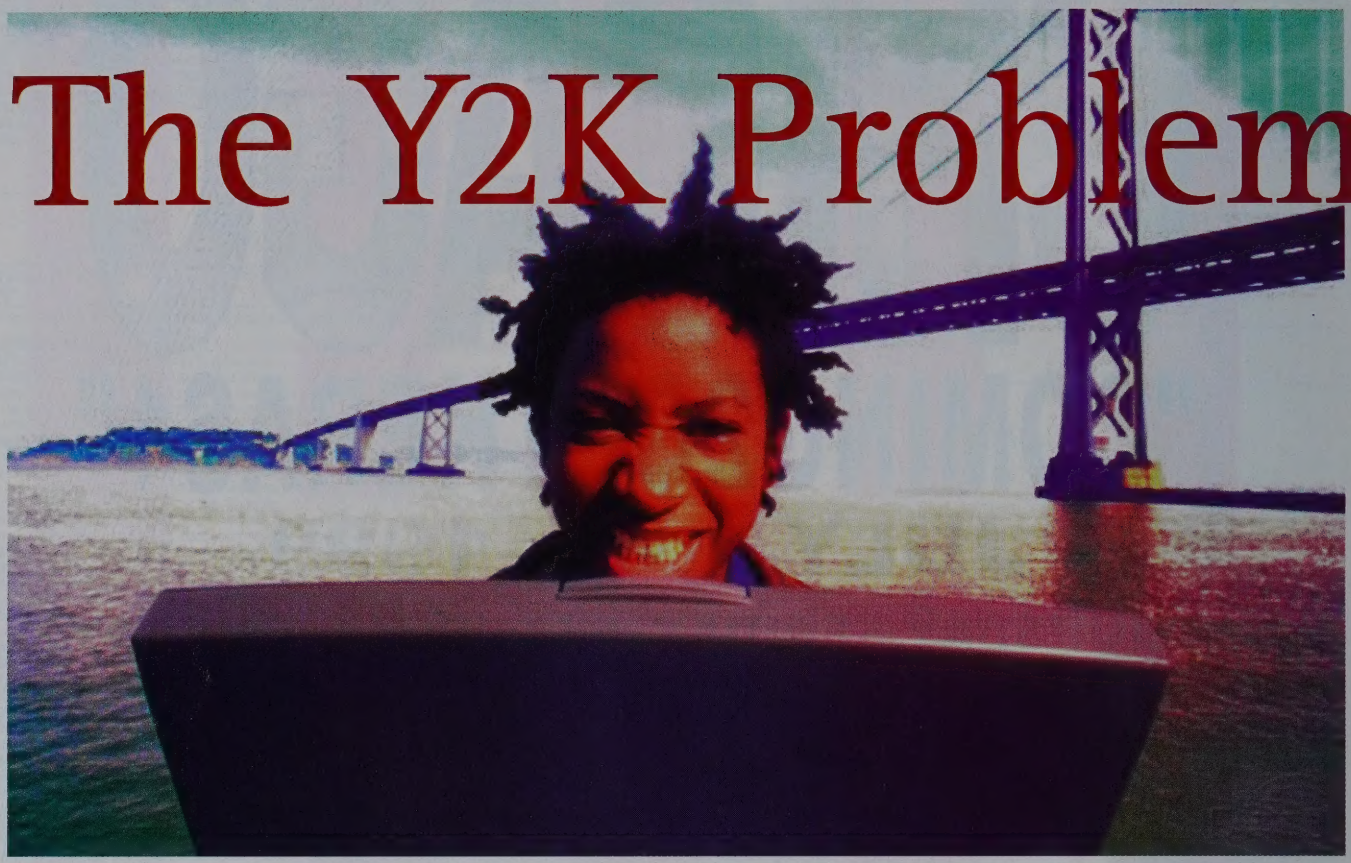
COMING SOON

The Y2K Problem



Throughout history, technology has brought both unexpected benefits and costs. The latest in a long line of snafus is the Year 2000 problem, often abbreviated as Y2K.

Simply put, many computer programmers in the past didn't expect the machines they were programming to still be in use today, so they permitted years to have only two digits. This shortsightedness will cause many programs to misread January 1, 2000, as January 1, 1900, which is expected to lead to widespread computer malfunctions and even crashes.

You would think that correcting Y2K would be easy. One thorny obstacle is finding the millions of tiny microprocessors embedded unobtrusively in the equipment of power plants and similar systems used by other industries. Another is having to manually sift through billions of lines of mainframe computer code—the intricacies makes automation impossible.

Personal computers are not immune. Inexcusably, many newer programs and computers were programmed without regard for the next millennium.

You've probably read some of the gloom-and-doom prophesies about the consequences of all this. The worst of the alarmists are predicting the collapse of industries ranging from electric power and telecommunications to banking and transportation, and they're planning to head for the hills to avoid the food shortages, bank closures, and riots that they expect will follow.

At the other extreme, others are pooh-poohing all the hullabaloo, confident that the experts will take care of matters.

Nobody knows for sure what's going to happen. But the best analysts are saying that we'll likely experience at least some disruptions, individually or collectively, and that some of these will be serious.

Fortunately, you can take steps to prepare for the problems you can't solve. And if you have a PC, you can take other steps to solve problems that may affect it.

Personal computer problems, though not hassle-free, are easiest to fix.

First, check with whomever you bought your computer to see if it's Y2K-compliant. Most newer models are, but even PCs a couple of years old may need an upgrade to their BIOS, which is a chip that includes instructions for handling dates and other operations.

Upgrading a BIOS can involve popping out the old chip and inserting a new one or downloading software over the Internet and "flashing" your old BIOS with updated code. You need to be careful here—a misstep can render your PC inoperable. Even though I followed instructions, flashing the BIOS of my 2 1/2-year-old Pentium 166 caused its sound to malfunction, which required a phone call to the manufacturer to fix.

You can alternately test your PC to

and You

see if it's Y2K-compliant. A number of Web sites provide access to free software for this purpose along with background information, including PC Magazine's at http://www.pcmag.com/y2k and CNET's at http://www.cnet.com/Content/Reports/Special/Y2K.

Software programs may also have problems when the new century rolls around. The most foolproof solution is to simply upgrade to the latest version of any mission-critical programs you use. Alternately, you can check with the software developer to see whether the version you're using is Y2K-compliant and, if not, whether a fix is available.

If you have a Macintosh computer, you have less to worry about, since the Mac and most Mac programs will handle the transition with ease.

Apple's Y2K site is at http://www.apple.com/macos/info/2000.html.

Some Y2K issues are entirely your own doing. Whether you're PC or Mac-based, if you've used two digits for date entries in spreadsheet, database, or accounting programs, and you plan to use the same files beyond 1999, you should convert the dates to four digits or look into other remedies.

Y2K issues involving custom computer programs can be a more difficult fix, and you or your organization should already have begun the process of identifying and fixing problems. This task can be so formidable that some organizations are replacing entire systems with newer ones.

The Y2K consequences beyond your control, if they occur at all, will likely be temporary. Still, short of becoming a survivalist, it makes sense to prepare for them. In case your bank's ATMs don't work correctly on January 1, 2000, have a little extra cash on hand. In the event of a food distribution foul-up, consider stocking up on a few canned goods during the week before.

Finally, since we'll be at the mercy of winter's throes, and since utility companies with all of their embedded processors may be most vulnerable to Y2K, have a contingency plan ready if you wake up in the middle of the night shivering.

Reid Goldsborough is a syndicated columnist and author of Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway.

IBM Gay and Lesbian Business Forum

For the first time ever, a group of Latin and African American gays and lesbians representing organizations and businesses from around the country met in Washington, D.C. at the IBM Gay and Lesbian Business Forum. The event was hosted by Venus magazine and National Latina/o Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered Organization, LLEGO. IBM sponsored the meeting and the company's Community Affairs Director, Leslie Smith, was the keynote speaker.

The group was welcomed by LLEGO Executive Director Martin Ornelas-Quintero (Pictured, top). The goals of the meeting were threefold: to give minority businesses within the gay and lesbian community an opportunity to develop a partnership with IBM; to network and exchange ideas about how to build better business relationships within minority communities across cultural lines; and to discuss Year 2000 problems and solutions.

IBM was cautioned by Clara Pizana of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, Inc. about the need for the company to spend more money in Latin and African American communities before expecting the communities to commit to business relationships. The group was reminded that big business spends money in areas where demographic studies show there are responsive communities in need of their products and services. "Although I KNOW you're out there, I've been told that you folks [black and Latino gays and lesbians] are not even here," says Smith.

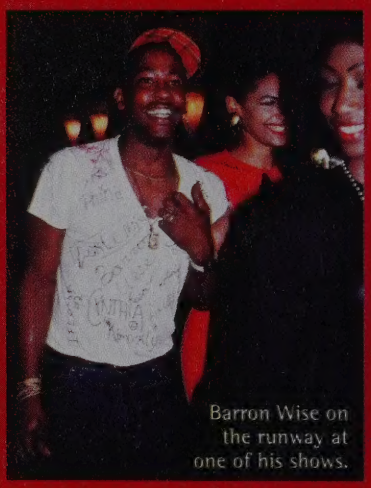
"It isn't that we are NOT here, it's that we have not been willing to stand up and say that we ARE here," returned Charlene Cothran, publisher of Venus magazine, who further expressed an urgent need for a demographic study of minority gay and lesbian communities. "When white gays wanted to be taken seriously by big business, they pooled their resources and paid to have a market study produced. Those numbers are now used in commercial industry as the standard for the whole gay and lesbian community but very few of the respondents to the surveys were people of color," says Cothran.

James Homer of Atlanta, who sits on the boards of several BLGT organizations asked, "So how, then, do we go about building relationships with major corporations?"

"By putting your money where your mouth is," answered Cornelius Wilson of Men of Color, Inc., of Detroit. Pending budget approval, Wilson is planning to purchase several new computers from IBM through the Venus magazine website where the company has offered several discounts on new products. "IBM recognizes that we exist and this is one way to show the company that we ARE here. Sure I can get the same computers somewhere else, but by making this type of purchase, my organization makes a statement about it's identity, and it's economic strength, all with one swipe of a credit card."

stylewise

New York fashion designer Barron Wise presents classic looks from his signature collection. The seasoned designer, who ran a 7th Avenue apparel shop earlier in his career now concentrates on private clients and menswear. "Don't call it a comeback," he says from his Harlem showroom, "I've been here for years and my collections are stronger than they've ever been." He also designs wedding gowns, prom dresses, and summer apparel for men. Call 212-690-2167 for an appointment.



Barron Wise on the runway at one of his shows.

Pumpkin Deep V-neck matte jersey dress

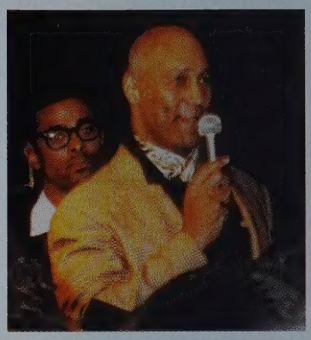
ALL PHOTOS COURTESY BARRON WISE

The Big Red Dress.
top: silk broadcloth
with silk tafetta trim.
skirt: red silk tafetta
with silk satin trim.

Periwinkle silk
chiffon and silk
satin winged dress.

Men of Color

Fall Fashion Week in New York brought out some of the city's Finest black male models including these gentlemen who dazzled a packed house at Café Soul Restaurant in Manhattan. The event marked the release of 'Men of Color' by Lloyd Boston. The book celebrates the history of Black male models.



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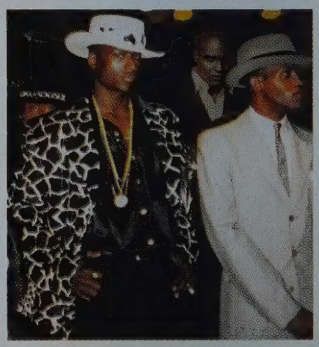

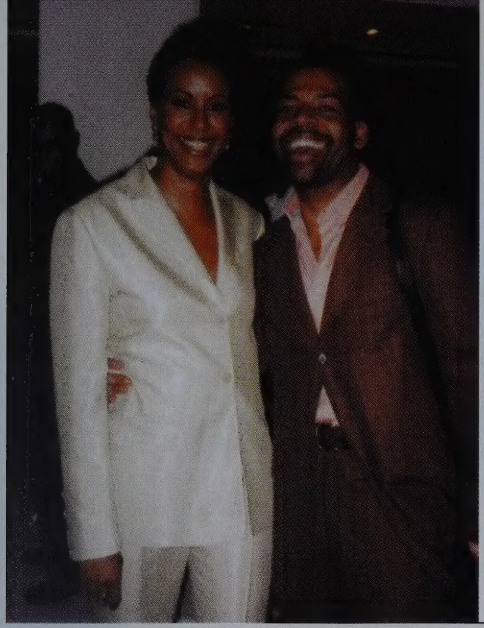

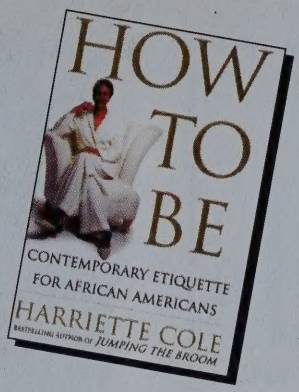

Harriette Cole, author of *'How to Be: Contemporary Etiquette for African-Americans'* and Llyod Boston, author of *'Men of Color'*.

Reknown make-up artist, Reggie Wells, second from right, and other guest were in attendance.

How to Be

Harriette Cole, best selling author of 'Jumping the Broom' launched her new book *'How To Be: Contemporary Etiquette for African-Americans'*, [Simon and Schuster, 1999 ISBN:0-684-82645-3] with a totally fabulous Manhattan party during Fall Fashion week. In the book, you'll find everything you need to know about how to honor your heritage; how to entertain one or a hundred; how to handle workplace issues; how to deal with family occasions from weddings to funerals and much, much more.

The book also addresses homophobia in black culture and offers suggestions on how the Black family might reevaluate the way they think of their gay brothers and sisters. "One gay man in a focus group said to me later that he didn't contribute fully because he knew that he would be made to feel unwelcome," she said during an interview from her Manhattan office. This encounter encouraged her to include research information on how in some traditional African societies, gays and lesbians are considered 'gatekeepers' and keepers of peace among the communities.

'How to Be' incredibly includes a 'how to' chapter for same-sex union ceremonies. Another chapter on dating includes same-sex relationships. Here she reveals what black gays have shared in focus groups around the country.

Things like why we're still searching for meaningful relationships in the bars. "Another gay man shared that because of social discomfort experienced by black gay men, it is hard to build wholesome relationships because they feel forced to go to clubs where no one can find a meaningful partner," she said.

The Founder and CEO of Profundities, Inc., and former fashion editor for *Essence* Magazine, Ms. Cole seemed eager to point out that she hopes her new book will help create "positive meaningful dialogue" within the black family. "When it comes to our gay brothers and sisters, most Black folks become focused on their SEXuality rather than their PERSONality. I hope my book will inspire people to look inside their own life, to have respect for the many differences of our people and to recognize that we all have gifts to offer."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KIMBERLY PURNELL

Harritte Cole and *Black Enterprise* Magazine publisher, Earl Graves at a Manhattan book release party for *'How to Be'*.

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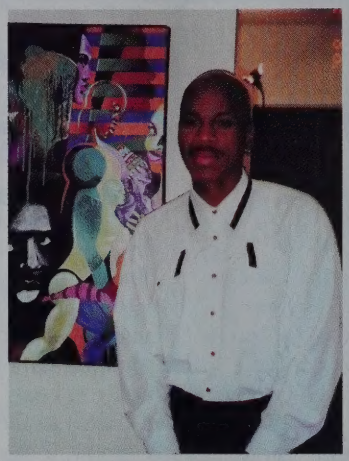
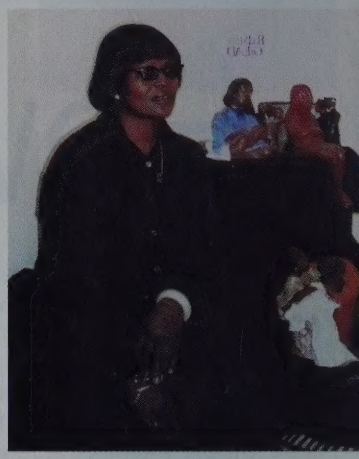
Left to Right - Brian Hayes Copeland, Healing Art Committee Member; Pernessa Seele, Founder/CEO of The Balm In Gilead; Brunson Nutridge, Artist; Jay Claude, Gay Men of African Descent; Kevin McGruder, Gay Men of African Descent



Brunson Nutridge, Artist



Joyce McDonald, Artist

The Balm in Gilead,

in observance of the Black Church Week of Prayer, presented six black artist art work.

The presentation entitled, *Healing Art: Visual Artists of African Descent in the Face of AIDS* was very well received and attended by black ministers of numerous Black Churches within the New York area as well as the *Daily News, NY1* and *WMBC, channel 69*. The project of Healing Art was conceived by committee member Ademola Mandella who stated that, "it is through this process of sharing visual expressions that we are healed from some of the pain that we have experienced from this epidemic." CEO and founder Pernessa C. Seele encouraged the attendees and press to get involved in educating the churches about HIV/AIDS and to keep the doors of communication open and flowing.

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COURTESY BYRON STEWART

A REAL READ: Doing Real Theatre

While Byron Stewart was pursuing a mainstream theater career, he just happened to catch a performance of the west coast gay male ensemble, Afro Pomo Homo.

Little did he know that this would be a turning point for him. Inspired by their work, Stewart began attending and performing at poetry readings in his native Chicago community. He even created and presented a one-man show, Black Out, which chronicled his personal saga as a gay man.

Stewart was amazed to find not only was there an audience for this type of theater, but there were other artists eager to participate in the creation of black gay productions. The Howard University graduate joined forces with two other local artists, Byron Mason and Sanford Gaylord, and together co-founded A Real Read, an African American gay-lesbian-bisexual-transgendered theater company based in Chicago, who prides itself on bringing a real message that is truthful and fierce. The company is committed to providing theater for, by, and about black alternative lifestyles.

Since its inception in 1996, A Real Read has had a number of acclaimed productions to its credit; Manchild, a drama about a bisexual drug dealer whose life is steeped in crisis; also, We Heard the Night Outside, which is the love story of the poets Essex Hemphill and Larry Duckette.

The company began with a faithful few, who were brave and bold enough to share their own stories. The company soon turned to pieces written by local gay and lesbian playwrights and poets, which were performed for local fundraisers, community events, and some Chicago high schools. The founders of A Real Read are proud that their company is made up of diverse genders, sexualities, and both professional and community actors.

A Real Read has never been afraid to be real. These artists take on the hard issues: relationships, HIV and AIDS, and the plain trials and triumphs of living in the life. About their dramatic works, Stewart says, "They come straight at ya." No apologies, no compromises.

According to Stewart, the response to A Real Read has been fantastic. Its work appeals to a wide range of people. From Blacks, Latinos, and whites, to straight and gay folk. As the word gets out, A Real Read is receiving invitations to other stages, both in and outside of Chicago. The company performed at New York University's Tisch School of Performing Arts and was featured on "In The Life", a PBS television show.

The company has also completed its first theater festival, "ALL OUT," which was comprised of five plays by Atlanta based playwright, Shirlene Holmes. These plays, which ranged from the sacred to the profane, paint a realistic picture of Black gay and lesbian life. From the sensitive and romantic, A Lady and a Woman, to the real and risque toast, Peaches.

Doing this play festival, which ran earlier this spring at the Baileywick Theatre, created excitement in the company and provided company members an opportunity to grow, and exposed the Chicago audience to other great pride plays. For this festival, A Real Read brought in guest directors, which was also a first. The festival was "all Black and all gay," Stewart exclaims with pride. And new projects are already in the works. He exhorts, "There's no excuse—it's here for you. Come and get it."

- S. Holmes

Sheryl Lee Ralph

From Dreamgirl to waitress; mistress to hair salon owner; voodou priestess to mother; Sheryl Lee Ralph has run the gamut when it comes to performing. From a young age, Sheryl has worked with the likes of Bill Cosby and Sidney Poitier in "Uptown Saturday Night", Denzel Washington in "The Mighty Quinn", Robert DeNiro in "The Mistress" and "Whoppi Goldberg in "Sister Act Two", just to name a few. Her recent portrayal of Brandy's step-mother on UPN's "Moesha" is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to working for Sheryl.

Sheryl's recent endeavors revolve around directing. "Directing is a natural and necessary progression for me. I felt the need to give life to stories and characters that have been silent for too long for too many reasons."

Little do many people know, but Sheryl also produces a benefit to raise funds for AIDS every year in May called "DIVAS! Simply Singing!

This magnetic show hosts Divas of all genre's singing one song accompanied by piano only! (Now you know you better know how to sing) "AIDS is a disease that has touched my life in many ways, and it just seemed natural to give back work at helping to fight a disease that has crippled our lives."

Sheryl has two beautiful children named Etienne and Ivy. "These two are my greatest accomplishments. They've made me see and realize what a beauty life really is."

TRIVIA QUESTION: What was the name of the only album Sheryl recorded?

The first person to answer correctly will receive an autographed photo from Sheryl.

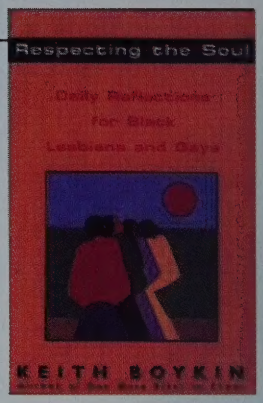
Send repies to:

editor@venusmagazine.com or fax to 914.376.1666. Include a mailing address!

- Kimberly Purnell

Respecting the Soul

RESPECTING THE SOUL:
Daily Reflections for Black Lesbians and Gays
by Keith Boykin
Avon Books, 1999



Respecting The Soul is the first daily reflections book for the black lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered community. The book is also targeted toward friends and family members of black lesbians and gays and anyone else who is dealing with issues of race or sexual orientation.

Respecting the Soul brings together the wit and wisdom of such diverse black heroes and sheroes as Alvin Ailey, Josephine Baker, James Baldwin, James Cleveland, Angela Davis, Peter Gomes, Lorraine Hansberry, Esse#πx Hemphill, Nona Hendryx, Langston Hughes, Carl Lewis, Little Richard, Audre Lorde, Jackie "Moms" Mabley, Nelson Mandela, Huey Newton, Me'Shell Ndege'Ocello, RuPaul, Bayard Rustin, Billy Strayhorn, Sylvester, Alice Walker, Flip Wilson, and many others, including the black and Latino drag queens who launched the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion.

Like Breathing

Like Breathing
Ric Rollins
Ishai Books, 1999

In his debut novel, Like Breathing, Ric Rollins has set the scene for the potentially rich interaction of characters. Public relations guru and all-around nice guy, Zander Eady, is on a quest for love. He thought he found it in the arty and closeted Gage Gregory, until the latter's exit to fulfill familial commitments. Parallel to their antics, we encounter the sassy wit of Rita Eady, Zander's "Big Mama," and the campy tirades of best friend Desmond Lowe. The story wouldn't be complete without the obligatory Diva, Zander's boss, Elle Paige. There's even a nod towards tragedy in Hakiem Adams, a disowned, HIV positive teen, which Zander believes he's mentoring. But Zander forgets him—and everyone else—when the possibility of real love shows up in the dashing news anchor, Jordan Jacobs.

Kudos to Rollins' depiction of black men who are unapologetic about their sexual identities. Rollins attempts to locate black gay men (BGM) within the supportive contexts of family and community while grappling with the search for love and self-fulfillment. The emotional development and portrayal of characters' psyches take a back seat to Rollins's concentration on their material possessions. The interesting subtexts around internet dating and the body image consciousness of BGM are never fully explored. However it is a worthy effort.

—review by Doug Jones

Last Rights

by Marvin K. White
Alyson Publications,1999

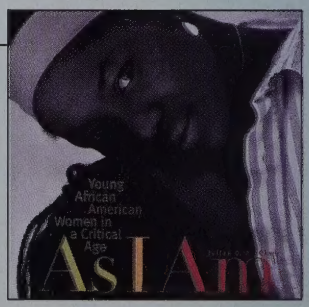
Last Rights is a powerful, passionate collection of verse which explores the essence of what it means to be black and gay. From homophobia in the African American community, to the double-barreled rage which comes from being a double minority, White's prose often leaps from the page in red-hot explosions, but it also exhibits heartrending tenderness when paying tribute to friends, lovers, parents, and community. It is an unforgettable combination.

When Marvin White writes of these things, you do not read them. You feel them. Deep inside, in places you have not visited before. You are there, on his street, in his church, singing, laughing, fighting, grieving.

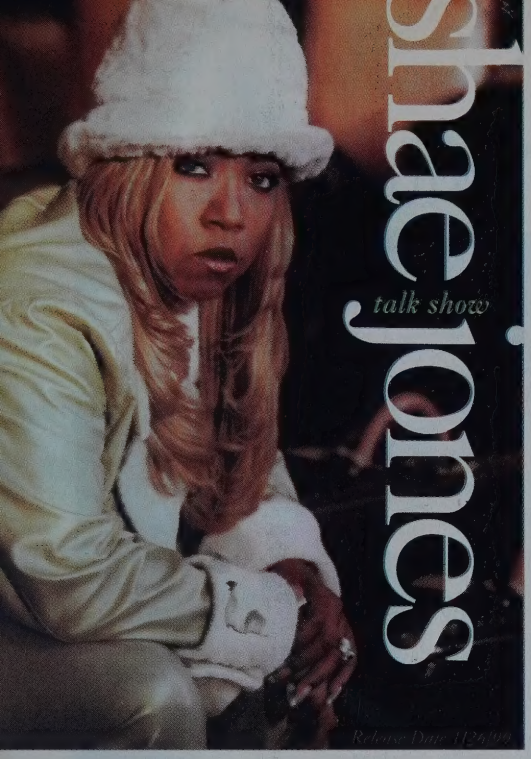
> *"Can you feel it/shakes before an earthquake/can you feel it/like the itch in your palm/ when payday is near/you can feel it/like the still birdsong before an eruption/can you feel it/like the still birdsong before an eruption/can you feel it/rolling in like a spirit riding a storm. ..."* He asks this in "Until." Yes Marvin, we can.

As I Am

Young African American Women in a Critical Age
by Julian C. R. Okwu
Chronicle Books, 1999 Paperback, $22.95



Acclaimed photographer Julian Okwu introduces us to thirty-six remarkable women who, in their own way, promote the triumph of the human spirit over diversity. Calling on lessons learned from their mothers, sisters, teachers, and friends, the thirty-six women of As I Am speak candidly about what it means to be a young African American woman living in the dawn of the new millennium.



talk show

It's not everyday a star is born. In a world of cookie cutter entertainers, musical sensations are more often created than discovered. Shae Jones is one of those rare discoveries. She is also a natural woman, one who speaks her mind—loud and clear on her debut disc Talk Show, the first release on M3, r & b singer Montell Jordan's record label, distributed by Universal Records. "I'm blunt, bottom-line and straightforward," cautions Shae, who song by song unleashes razor-sharp observations and potent vocals.

Talk Show travels through the in-your-face exploits of a '90s woman. With interludes that push the album's plot forward, the 14-track collection explores sex, love, and the drama associated with both. "My project is about women voicing their opinions. It's a wake-up call for men." Shae co-wrote three cuts on the album, with a majority of the writing and production handled by the platinum-selling Montell Jordan and his M3 crew (Shep Crawford, Dove Daniels and Jazz "The Man").

The first single is the timely "Talk Show Shhh!"—a saucy ballad about adultery with a story torrid enough for Jerry Springer (who makes a cameo in the "Talk Show Shhh!" video), co-written and produced by Jordan. The pumped up "Talk Show Shhh! (remix)" spices up the album even more.

"Got me goin' round/When I take him down/Makes me want it bad/Ain't nothing like a bad boy," Shae sensually sings over the infectious beat of the sizzler "Bad Boy." Rapper Ja Rule, a member of the soon to be released Bad Boy recording group Murder Inc. (with DMX and Jay-Z), provides the rhyme.

"If My Man Finds Out" is a funky upbeat tale of an unfaithful but blissful romance written by Jordan and produced by Teddy Bishops, producer of Jordan's chart-topping "Let's Ride." The laid-back, bumping "Let Him Go" explores the undeniable physical attraction of an ex, while "Symptoms Of A Heartbreak" is an arresting, emotional ballad about the painful end of a relationship.

Shae's deep, powerful vocals make you feel the hurt. On the explosive "Him And You," Shae teams up with another straightforward songstress, Kelly Price. The two dynamic divas take control of the song, written by Price and produced by Jazz.

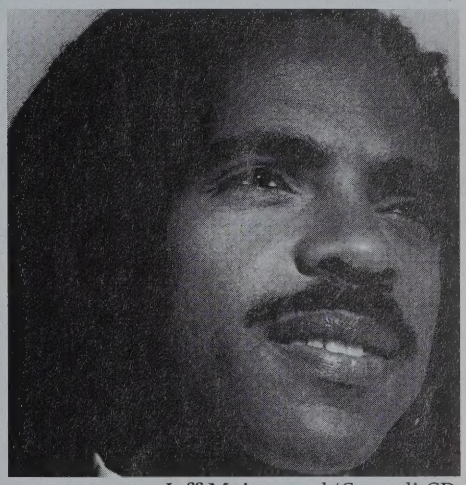
Rounding out the Talk Show set is the inspirational "Hold On," a cut co-written by Shae, Jordan, and Crawford, and featuring the Fulfillment Choir. It's Shae's "stay strong" anthem for women.

soothing the spirit

Need something to help you relieve pent-up stresses that mount from the arduous hardships of today's world? Try listening to *Sacred*, the soothing album by Jeff Majors. Crossing all religious boundaries with its universal appeal, *Sacred* eases the spirit and refreshes the soul with cheerful and joyous interpretations of eleven spiritual favorites. The album's chiming melodies soak into even the most frazzled emotional state to produce sunny mental images.

Affectionately named Hanifah—which is the name of an ancient Egyptian queen who used her beauty and wisdom to heal—Majors uses his custom-made harp to deliver rhythm-inspired melodies of spiritual love to generate a warm, back-home, family feeling.

Favorites like "Blessed Assurance" and "Walk in the Light" offer hints of breezy Caribbean rhythm while maintaining the essence of the songs' traditional melody, as does "Precious Lord", which draws its strength, in part, from the emotive vocals of gospel great Genobia Jeter.

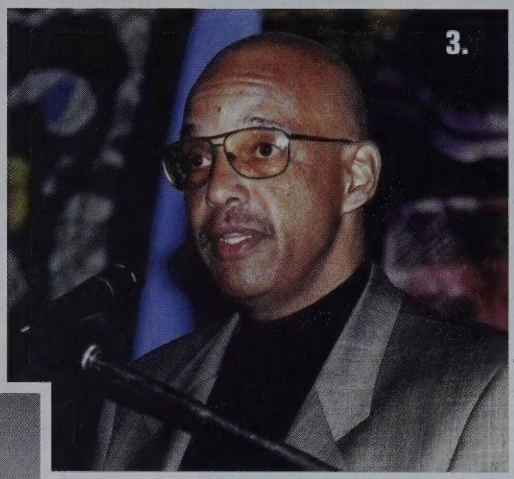

Jeff Majors and 'Sacred' CD

A quiet, reserved student of music, Majors first experienced "playing" the harp in a dream while still a teenager. After finishing high school, Majors moved to California, where he studied music under the guidance of artist Alice Coltrane, widow of jazz legend John Coltrane. He later returned to his roots to share his soothing music with an array of kinsmen—from school children to inmates in correctional facilities. Also produced by Majors, this very special CD takes listeners on a *Sacred* musical journey.

Atlanta Conference - 12th Annual NBLGLC

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARY MCNAMARA

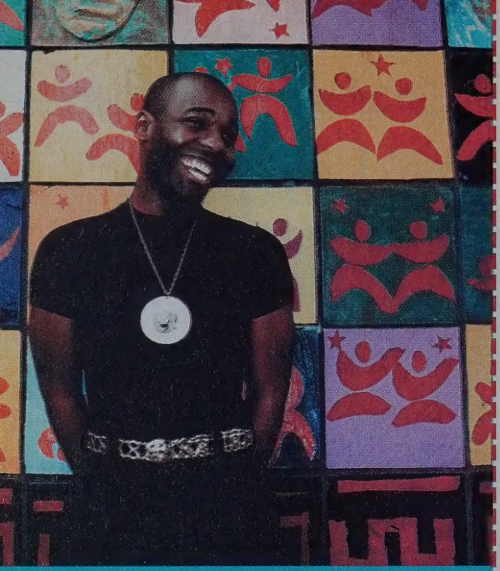
1. Grammy-award winner, Regina Belle, signs autographs after she performed cuts from her new CD *'Believe In Me'* at the National Black Lesbian and Leadership Conference in Atlanta last February. **2.** Comedienne, Karen Williams, Mistress of Ceremonies **3.** Monique Meadows, former office director of the NBLGLF and current Vice President of the Black Lesbian Support Group, Washington, D.C. accepting the **Mabel Hampton award.** **4.** [l to r] Sheila Duckworth, Barbara Tyler, and Martha Bell (Barbara's mother) **5.** [l to r] Michael Gipson, C. Smith, Jaron Bryant **6.** [l] Dwight Canter and Greg Eugene **7.** Sydney J. Thompson of Portland, OR **8.** [l to r] Martina Downey, Paula Polk, and Panda **9.** Debra Rose **10.** Martin Ornelas-Quintero, Executive Director of LLEGO accepting the **Allie Award** **11.** Author, James Earl Hardy accepting the **James Baldwin Award** **12.** Keiron Williams, of the Morehouse College Gay Student Alliance, accepting the **Joan Fountain Award.** **13.** [l to r] Karen Williams, Dr. Kofi Adoma - Violinist and activist of Detroit, MI., Dr. Marjorie Hill - Commissioner of New York City Workers Compensation Board.



1,2, & 3 BY NEIL COLLINS

4 & 5 BY MARY MCNAMARA

1. Gay Men Of African Descent, GMAD honor Outstanding Men at the Conservatory of Black Theater in New York City. Honorees include [l to r] GMAD staff member Ray Williams, Rev. Zachary Jones - Pastor of Unity Fellowship Church of Brooklyn, NY, Keith Boykin - author of Respecting the Soul: Daily Reflections of Black Lesbians and Gays, Cleo Manago - Executive Director of AMASSI Center of Inglewood, CA, Activist George Bellinger of New York, and New York City Councilman Phil Reed. **2.** GMAD Board of Director, [top row, l to r] Kenneth Tolbert, Keith Amperado, Dariel Jones, Russell Baptiste, David Walker, Edward Thomas, William Richardson, Ivery Thomas, [bottom row] GMAD Executive Director Kevin McGruder, staff member Donald Powell, Board members Reginald Sanford, Michaels Saunders and Terrich Marable. **3.** The Honorable Phil Reed, New York City councilman, the Keynote speaker. **4.** Activist George Bellinger unveils a tribute to the late Reggie Williams, at the 12th National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Conference in Atlanta. Williams, a Black Gay and AIDS activist died last Feb. **5.** [l to r] Monique Meadows, M'Bwende Anderson, and Charlotte Young at NBLGLC.



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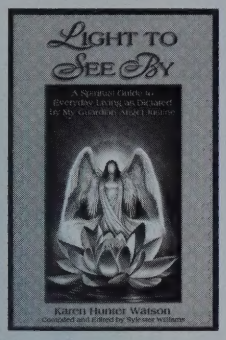

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BY REGINA M. KNOTTS

OUT at the Beauty Shop

The beauty shop, like the black church, is a staple in our community for sisterly discourse. It's supposed to be a safe place where sistahs can discuss their lives openly knowing that their feelings will be heard and acknowledged. But what happens to that safety for lesbian, bisexual, or transgender sistahs when the context of the beauty shop is completely heterosexual? It becomes a land mine-filled with difficult choices about how to be...what to say...and what to hide in a place that's supposed to be free of hidden explosions. Despite the comfort I felt in this sisterspace, I knew I'd eventually step on one of those damn mines. I remember the explosion: "So Regina, do you go out much?" my stylist asked.

For months I've waited for "the question" to be asked-one whose answer would reveal aspects of me that would change my relationship with my stylist forever. I am afraid, and I'm sitting here wondering why. I don't just fear rejection from this individual sistah. I also fear permanent ejection from a nurturing ground within the black community. But if I stay in the closet, I'll automatically cut off my soul from its regenerative energy, right? You have two choices, Regina, come out and risk external rejection, or stay in the closet and let your spirit suffocate. I chose the latter: "Oh, I'm too busy," I answered, hoping she would be satisfied with my deflection. She left it alone and went on to another topic while I went back to hiding my soul. I simply could not overcome my fear of being permanently exiled from the black community.

Writing this piece has certainly helped me face this deep fear and to recognize the need to reflect and pray about it. "Lord, my soul feels cut off from the love that exists in others. I'm so eager to connect with my people and to the love within me. Which path should I take? What choice should I make?" My answer came later that day through a sistahfriend who wrote: Our connection is our quest for touching our divinity within our humanity-and to seek the Light in those we encounter. Be open, be honest, and let your Light shine. Those who can't stand the Light shall remain in the dark no matter what you do.

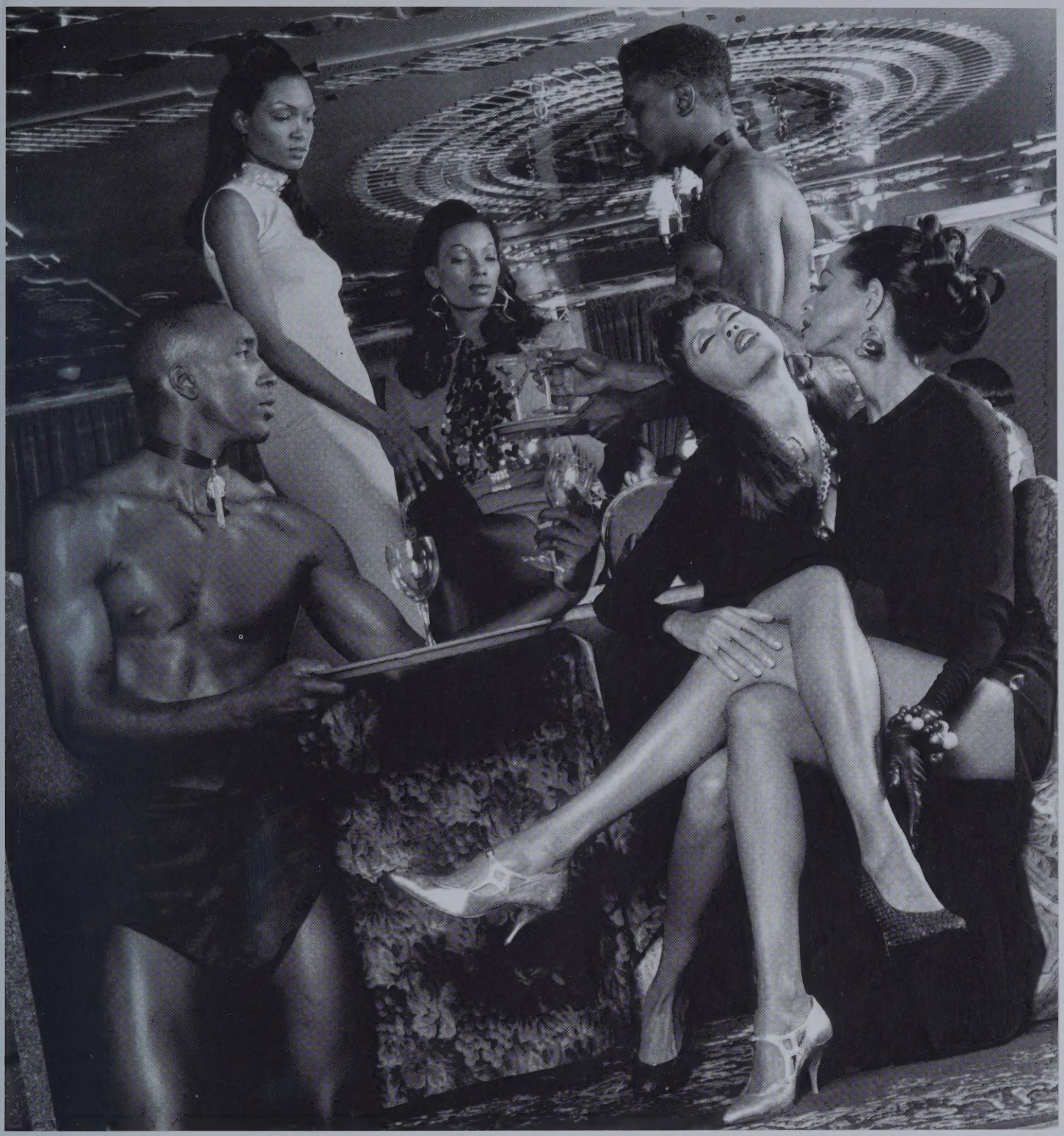
As I stare at her words, recognition sets in and tears flow from my soul. I have a new weapon to battle my fears. For that, I will be eternally grateful.

By the time you read this, I will have come out to those I suspect are waiting for me to come into my own Light and share. For those of you, like me, whose greatest fear is being cut off from the energy of the black community, focus on your Divine Light. Do that and the right choice will be there for all to see.

Thanks Sweet Lord the message has been received.

I FEAR PERMANENT EJECTION FROM A NURTURING GROUND WITHIN THE BLACK COMMUNITY. BUT IF I STAY IN THE CLOSET, I'LL AUTOMATICALLY CUT OFF MY SOUL FROM ITS REGENERATIVE ENERGY, RIGHT?

Regina M. Knotts, a native of Newark, Delaware, currently manages an interviewing site for a marketing research firm. She is an aspiring sociologist who is preparing for a return to graduate school.



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The 7 Most Eligible Black Gay Men
by Bernard Tarver

SPECIAL SWIMSUIT ISSUE

Ruth Ellis: Timeless Beauty
by Anderson Jones

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Being HIV+ isn't easy.

It's a daily challenge that can take all you've got. It helps to have an advantage – to lighten your load and keep you going. Federal healthcare guidelines now call for including a potent protease inhibitor as part of combination treatments to fight HIV. Consider these reasons to make the protease inhibitor CRIXIVAN the foundation of your treatment regimen.

CRIXIVAN is a protease inhibitor that fights HIV. CRIXIVAN can help reduce the chance of illnesses and death associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 T-cell count. Some patients may not experience these effects. CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS.

NIH research showed people taking CRIXIVAN in triple therapy lived longer and experienced fewer opportunistic infections.

Recent year-long research conducted by the National Institutes of Health (Protocol ACTG 320) studied over 1,000 patients and confirmed results from another study.

The group of patients receiving CRIXIVAN along with 3TC and AZT achieved a reduction in deaths and AIDS-defining illnesses over those taking 3TC and AZT alone. This reduction was significant enough for the NIH to recommend the study be stopped, so that all participants could benefit from the findings. Because the study was ended early, there was insufficient data to determine the statistical impact of CRIXIVAN on survival.

CRIXIVAN in triple therapy continues to hold serum viral load down below the limit of detection at the one year mark.

In a separate, ongoing landmark study, over 90% of the 31 patients receiving CRIXIVAN, AZT, and 3TC reduced their HIV serum viral load below the limit of detection after 24 weeks (as measured by available tests; the virus may still be present in other organ systems).

Importantly, the limited number of patients who chose to stay with the study for longer periods of time maintained these results through the one year mark.

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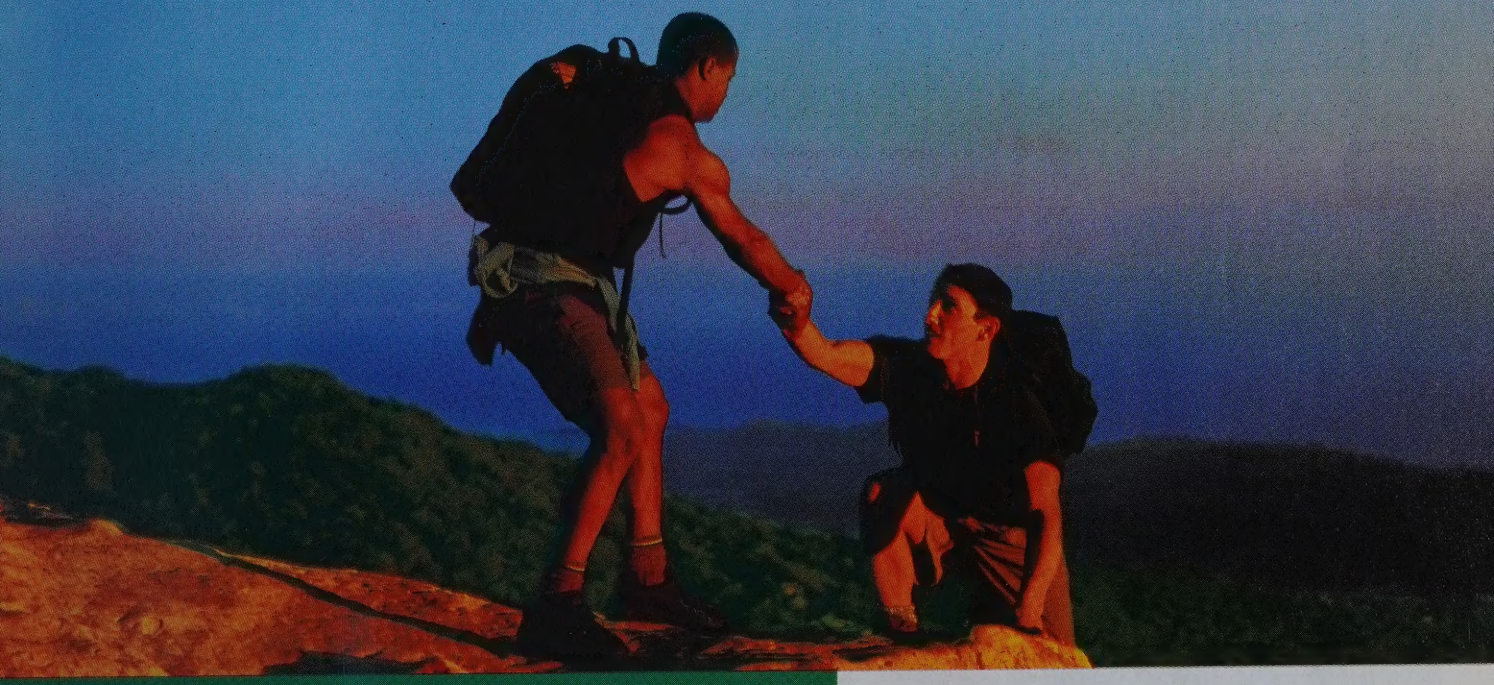
www.crixivan.com

CRIXIVAN may help you live a longer, healthier life.



CRIXIVAN is generally well tolerated.

CRIXIVAN can be taken with a light meal or on an empty stomach. There are side effects associated with protease inhibitors in general and CRIXIVAN in particular. Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN may develop kidney stones. For some, this can lead to more severe kidney problems including kidney failure. Drinking at least 6 glasses of water each day may help reduce the chance of forming a kidney stone. Other side effects reported include rapid breakdown of red blood cells and liver problems.

As with other protease inhibitors, severe muscle pain and weakness have occurred in patients also taking cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins". Additionally, as with other protease inhibitors, increased bleeding in some patients with hemophilia and increased blood sugar levels or diabetes have been reported. Please read the following page for detailed information on side effects and dosing.

Focus on the rest of your life.

Learn all you can about HIV therapy. Talk with your doctor. Stay informed and stay the course. With viral load below the limit of detection and an increase in CD4 T-cells, it's easier to look forward to the future with confidence.

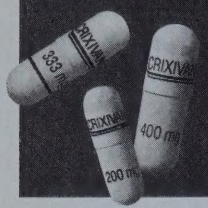
There are some common medications and AIDS-related medications you should not take with CRIXIVAN. Discuss all medications you are taking or plan to take with your doctor.

Please read the following page for more detailed information about CRIXIVAN.

Remember to ask your doctor about CRIXIVAN.

CRIXIVAN®
(indinavir sulfate)
Capsules

Going the distance.



CRIXIVAN®
(indinavir sulfate)
Capsules

Patient Information about CRIXIVAN* (KRIK-sih-van)
for HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) Infection
Generic name: indinavir (in-DIH-nuh-veer) sulfate

Please read this information before you start taking CRIXIVAN. Also, you should read the information included with CRIXIVAN each time you receive your prescription, just in case anything has changed. Remember, this information does not take the place of careful discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss CRIXIVAN when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when using CRIXIVAN and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

What is CRIXIVAN?

CRIXIVAN is an oral capsule used for the treatment of HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus). HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). CRIXIVAN is a type of HIV drug called a protease (PRO-tee-ase) inhibitor.

How does CRIXIVAN work?

CRIXIVAN is a protease inhibitor that fights HIV. CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 (T) cell count. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

CRIXIVAN is usually prescribed with other anti-HIV drugs such as ZDV (also called AZT), 3TC, ddI, ddC, or d4T. CRIXIVAN works differently from these other anti-HIV drugs. Talk with your doctor about how you should take CRIXIVAN.

CRIXIVAN has been studied in adults. The safety and effectiveness of CRIXIVAN in children and adolescents have not been established.

How should I take CRIXIVAN?

There are six important things you must do to help you benefit from CRIXIVAN:

1. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every day as prescribed by your doctor.** Continue taking CRIXIVAN unless your doctor tells you to stop. Take the exact amount of CRIXIVAN that your doctor tells you to take, right from the very start. To help make sure you will benefit from CRIXIVAN, you must not skip doses or take "drug holidays." If you don't take CRIXIVAN as prescribed, the activity of CRIXIVAN may be reduced (due to resistance).
2. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every 8 hours around the clock, *every day*.** It may be easier to remember to take CRIXIVAN if you take it at the same time every day. If you have questions about when to take CRIXIVAN, your doctor or health care provider can help you decide what schedule works for you.
3. **If you miss a dose by more than 2 hours, wait and then take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time.** However, if you miss a dose by less than 2 hours, take your missed dose immediately. Then take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. Do not take more or less than your prescribed dose of CRIXIVAN at any one time.
4. **Take CRIXIVAN with water.** You can also take CRIXIVAN with other beverages such as skim or non-fat milk, juice, coffee, or tea.
5. **Ideally, take each dose of CRIXIVAN without food but with water at least one hour before or two hours after a meal.** Or you can take CRIXIVAN with a light meal. Examples of light meals include:
   - dry toast with jelly, juice, and coffee (with skim or non-fat milk and sugar if you want)
   - corn flakes with skim or non-fat milk and sugar

   Do not take CRIXIVAN at the same time as any meals that are high in calories, fat, and protein (for example — a bacon and egg breakfast). When taken at the same time as CRIXIVAN, these foods can interfere with CRIXIVAN being absorbed into your bloodstream and may lessen its effect.
6. **It is critical that you drink at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquid (preferably water) throughout the day, every day. CRIXIVAN can cause kidney stones.** Having enough fluids in your body should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

Does CRIXIVAN cure HIV or AIDS?

CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking CRIXIVAN may still develop infections or other conditions associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important for you to remain under the care of a doctor. Although CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS, CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses, including death, associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

Does CRIXIVAN reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

CRIXIVAN has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

Who should not take CRIXIVAN?

Do not take CRIXIVAN if you have had a serious allergic reaction to CRIXIVAN or any of its components.

What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor?

Talk to your doctor if:

- You are pregnant or if you become pregnant while you are taking CRIXIVAN. We do not yet know how CRIXIVAN affects pregnant women or their developing babies.
- You are breast-feeding. You should stop breast-feeding if you are taking CRIXIVAN.

Also talk to your doctor if you have:

- Problems with your liver, especially if you have mild or moderate liver disease caused by cirrhosis.
- Problems with your kidneys.
- Diabetes
- Hemophilia
- High cholesterol and you are taking cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins."

Tell your doctor about any medicines you are taking or plan to take, including non-prescription medicines.

*Can CRIXIVAN be taken with other medications?***

Drugs you should not take with CRIXIVAN:

SELDANE® (terfenadine)	HISMANAL® (astemizole)
VERSED® (midazolam)	HALCION® (triazolam)
PROPULSID® (cisapride)	Ergot medications (e.g., Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

Taking CRIXIVAN with the above medications could result in serious or life-threatening problems (such as irregular heartbeat or excessive sleepiness).

In addition, you should not take CRIXIVAN with rifampin, known as RIFADIN®, RIFAMATE®, RIFATER®, or RIMACTANE®.

Drugs you can take with CRIXIVAN include:

RETROVIR® (zidovudine, ZDV also called AZT)	BIAXIN® (clarithromycin)
TAGAMET® (cimetidine)	isoniazid (INH)
DIFLUCAN® (fluconazole)	ORTHO-NOVUM 1/35® (oral contraceptive)
EPIVIR™ (lamivudine, 3TC)	ZERIT® (stavudine, d4T)

BACTRIM®/SEPTRA® (trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole)

VIDEX® (didanosine, ddI) — If you take CRIXIVAN with VIDEX®, take them at least one hour apart.

MYCOBUTIN® (rifabutin) — If you take CRIXIVAN with MYCOBUTIN®, your doctor may adjust both the dose of MYCOBUTIN and the dose of CRIXIVAN.

NIZORAL® (ketoconazole) — If you take CRIXIVAN with NIZORAL®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

Talk to your doctor about any medications you are taking.

What are the possible side effects of CRIXIVAN?

Like all prescription drugs, CRIXIVAN can cause side effects. The following is **not** a complete list of side effects reported with CRIXIVAN when taken either alone or with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this page alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN developed kidney stones. In some of these patients this led to more severe kidney problems, including kidney failure or inflammation of the kidneys. Drinking at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquid (preferably water) each day should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had rapid breakdown of red blood cells (hemolytic anemia) which in some cases was severe or resulted in death.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had liver problems including liver failure and death. Some patients had other illnesses or were taking other drugs. It is uncertain if CRIXIVAN caused these liver problems.

Diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) have occurred in patients taking protease inhibitors. In some of these patients, this led to ketoacidosis, a serious condition caused by poorly controlled blood sugar. Some patients had diabetes before starting protease inhibitors, others did not. Some patients required adjustments to their diabetes medication. Others needed new diabetes medication.

In some patients with hemophilia, increased bleeding has been reported.

Severe muscle pain and weakness have occurred in patients taking protease inhibitors, including CRIXIVAN, together with some of the cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins." Call your doctor if you develop severe muscle pain or weakness.

Clinical Studies

Increases in bilirubin (one laboratory test of liver function) have been reported in approximately 10% of patients. Usually, this finding has not been associated with liver problems. However, on rare occasions, a person may develop yellowing of the skin and/or eyes.

Side effects occurring in 2% or more of patients included: abdominal pain, fatigue or weakness, flank pain, feeling unwell, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, acid regurgitation, loss of appetite, dry mouth, back pain, headache, trouble sleeping, dizziness, taste changes, rash, upper respiratory infection, dry skin, and sore throat.

Swollen kidneys due to blocked urine flow occurred rarely.

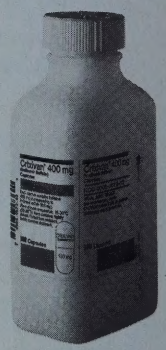
Marketing Experience

Other side effects reported since CRIXIVAN has been marketed include: allergic reactions; severe skin reactions; abdominal swelling; inflammation of the kidneys; inflammation of the pancreas; increased fat appearing in areas such as the neck, breasts, abdomen, and back; change in skin color; hair loss; ingrown toenails with or without infection; crystals in the urine; and numbness of the mouth.

Tell your doctor promptly about these or any other unusual symptoms. If the condition persists or worsens, seek medical attention.

How should I store CRIXIVAN capsules?

- Keep CRIXIVAN capsules in the bottle they came in and at room temperature (59°F-86°F).
- Keep CRIXIVAN capsules dry by leaving the small desiccant "pillow" in the bottle. Keep the bottle closed.



This medication is prescribed for a particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep CRIXIVAN and all medicines out of the reach of children. If you suspect that more than the prescribed dose of this medicine has been taken, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

This provides a summary of information about CRIXIVAN. If you have any questions or concerns about either CRIXIVAN or HIV, talk to your doctor.

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CRIXIVAN®
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Capsules

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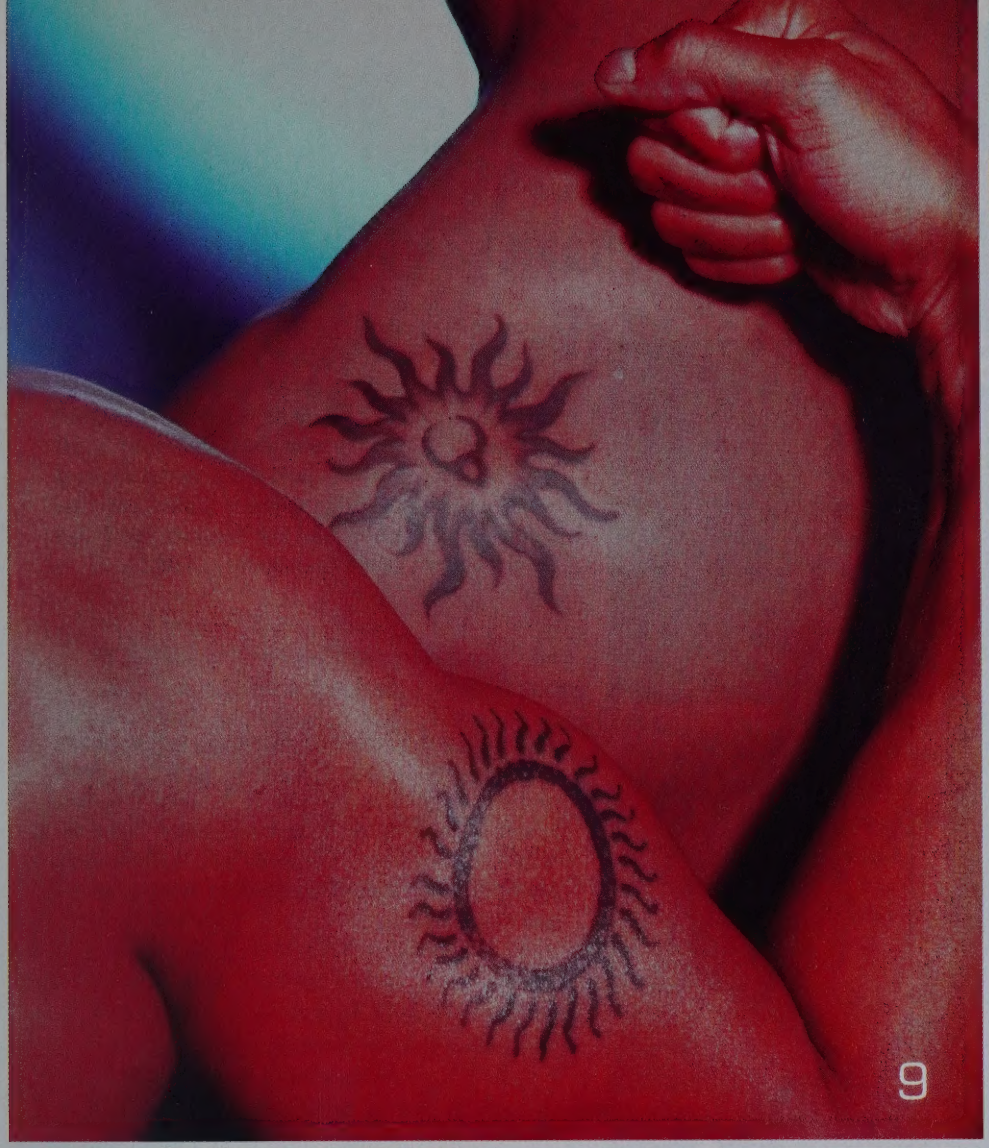

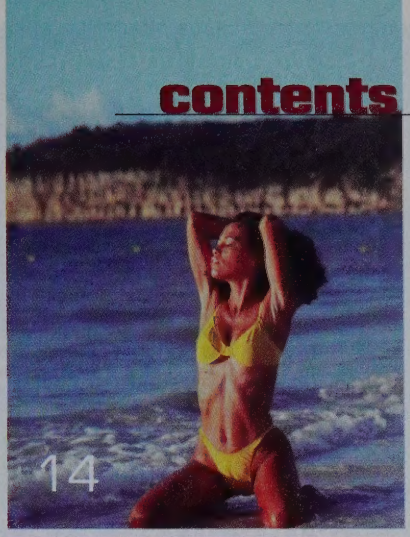

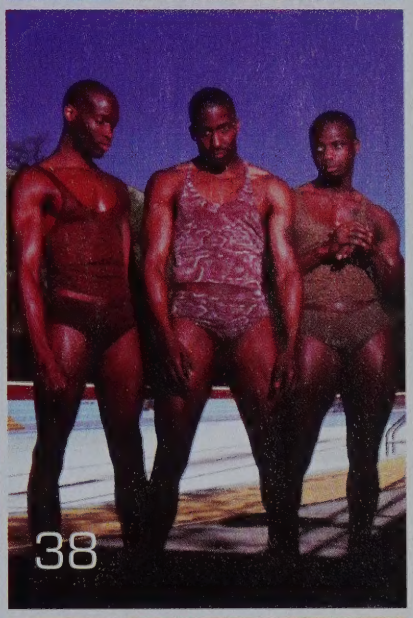

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He opened your eyes
with *Invisible Life*...

He rocked your world
with *Just As I Am*...

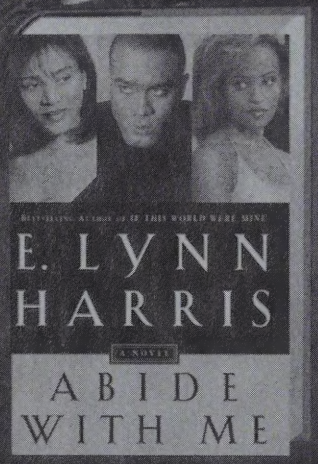
Now, *New York Times*
bestselling author

E. Lynn Harris

will ignite your soul
with his new novel

Abide with Me

Matthew Jordan Smith



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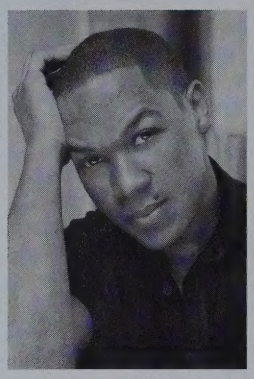
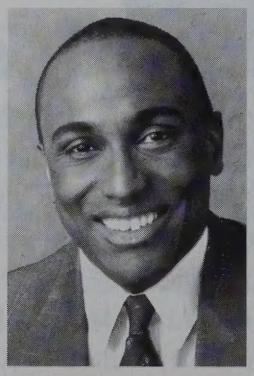


DeAlan Wilson is a New York City based fashion photographer/entrepreneur and this issues's cover photographer. He began his career five years ago with a 35mm camera given to him as a gift from his mother. He has built a successful business which includes a fully equipped studio and four employees. Wilson is also the president of 1-2-3 Entertainemnt Talent Management Corp.

Joy Isoke is an Institute Astrologer & Consultant. She has been involved in Astrology for 24 years and maintains her practice in Atlanta, Georgia, where she specializes in self awareness and conscious relationships. Currently, she is working on promoting Conscious Relationship Workshops for gay and lesbians.

Hosea Johnson a native of Chicago, is living and working in New York City. He has done work as a photographer for *Essence*, *Emerge*, *The Source*, and *The New York Times Magazine*. Johnson, a fashion photographer, is a member of the SGI USA, a lay Buddhist organization that follows the teachings of Nichlren Daishonin.



Bernard J. Tarver is an actor, writer and public relations consultant in New York City. A former resident of Albany, New York, where he was instrumental in the development of two organizations for gay and lesbian people of color, he has written commentaries, book reviews, and news articles for numerous gay periodicals, web sites and radio programs, Tarver contributed to the issue's feature on eligible gay men.

OUR VENUS ONLINE SURVEY SHOWS 47 PERCENT OF US ARE IN LONG TERM, MONOGAMOUS RELATIONSHIPS, ALTHOUGH 87 PERCENT OF US WANT TO BE.

This is our first ever "Swimsuit Issue" and I must admit it is a departure from our normally sedate presentation. We open with our hot new beauty department. If you need inspiration for a sensational tattoo idea, you will not be disappointed. Next, we take you on a romp through the beaches of the Caribbean and find some gorgeous reasons to plan our next vacation there. And summer's not over until you've experienced our sizzling Pool Party for Brothas only.

There's plenty of eye candy, but you can't miss the substance in this issue either. Like our story on the darling of gay America, Ruth Ellis. We celebrate her timeless beauty and her ageless mind as she celebrates turning 100 years old. And there's more!

Our Venus Online survey shows 47 percent of us are in long term monogamous relationships, although 87 percent of us want to be. We all have a basic need to be in a loving relationship and to be supported by family and friends. We tend to ask ourselves if it's even possible to find Mr. or Ms. "Right" in our society given all it's challenges. Well, Venus has come to the rescue for the brothas! We have compiled a group of eligible bachelors who candidly talk about what they want in a mate. These gentlemen are sincere, handsome, and accomplished.

Our writers and editors would like to see "Eligible Bachelors" become a regular column proposing that it would help to promote positive images of black gay men in relationships and successfully match intelligent, upwardly mobile brothas with men like themselves who have given up on [or never did do] the bars, the 'personals' and the chat rooms. Your response to this issue will help determine whether or not the new "Eligible Bachelors" column becomes a regular feature, so let us know what you think! Email editor@venusmagazine.com. And yes, Sistahs, you've got a Bachelorette feature coming up!

Charlene Cothran,
Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

"IN THIS AGE OF MEDIA AND INFORMATION SATURATION, I'VE DECIDED THAT I MUST REDUCE MY NUMBER OF SOURCES. I'M PROUD TO SAY THAT VENUS IS ON MY LIST OF A CHOSEN FEW."

STAYING POWER

I currently have a subscription to your magazine, and would like to commend you on your staying power through the years. Lord knows we need you. Thanks!
S. Guerrant
Atlanta, GA

CHOSEN FEW

I just picked up the latest issue of *Venus* and wanted to say Thanks! The Cover is beautiful and so are the stories that follow. I find the magazine enlightening and entertaining. In this age of media and information saturation, I've decided that I must reduce my sources. I'm proud to say that *Venus* is on my list of a chosen few. I await the new issues with great anticipation. Let's keep this thing together! Peace.
D. Carlton
via the internet

COFFEE TABLE

I've always enjoyed my *Venus* magazine and keep them on my coffee table in my living room at all times. I don't need *Ebony* or *Essence* because I've got a magazine that reflects my own voice and includes images of me and my world. Thanks, *Venus* for being here for us. Detroit is in your corner.
K. Adoma
Detroit, MI

BLANKET OF SILENCE

The issue about "black & blue" [Vol. 4 No. 4, 1998] impacted me personally and catapulted me into action. My group, Folami {respect & honor me}, recently invited the Women Resource Center of Atlanta to our meeting. They had an in-depth discussion with our community about Same-Sex Domestic Violence. We were very fortunate to have such knowledgeable resources available to us. And yet, there is much more to do to pull the blanket of silence off the matter. Thank you so much for the story and for being a voice in the BLGT community.
F. Brown
Atlanta, GA

KEEPING LOVE STRONG

We would like to say that we both love your magazine very much. The issues you discuss help Laurel and me realize that not everyone is against our relationship, and they help us to keep our relationship strong. Thanks for being there for us.
Betsy & Laurel
via the internet

I'VE FOUND YOU

I'm very happy to have found your magazine. There is absolutely nothing in Canada's maritime provinces for black lesbians and gays. I look forward to receiving each issue. Peace and Love.
S. Taker
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Venus™

FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT IN THE LIFE

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Tattoo You

Tribal Markings in the Asphalt Jungle

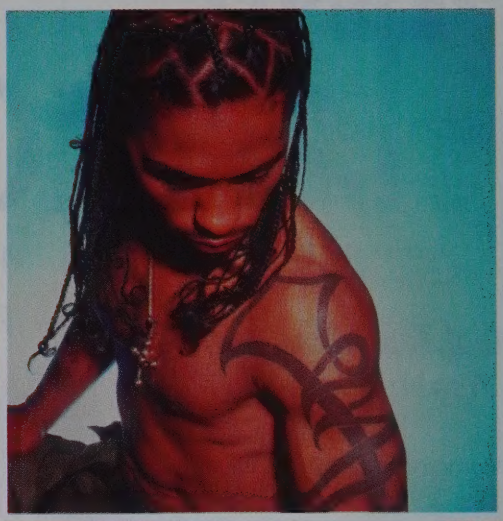
By Byron Barnes

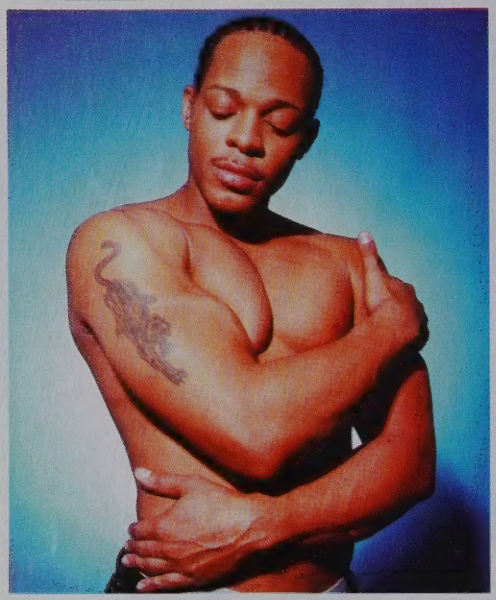
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DEALAN WILSON

All over America Tattoos are springing up in inner cities. *Venus* wanted to know why. This is what we found out.

Movie stars. Video vixens. Professional athletes. R&B singers. Rappers and hoi polloi--just plain folk. Can you guess what they have in common? Simple. Members of all these clans sport tattoos. That's right, those skin markings that we used to associate with sailors and unsavory characters. Things have changed. **Tattooing is becoming downright respectable. This practice of pricking and ingraining an indelible pigment** into the skin dates back to prehistoric times. Now, however, personalities such as D'Angelo, Busta Rhyme, Foxy Brown, and Ginuwine have given the art form a brand new audience.

To get the lowdown on contemporary tattooing, *Venus* visited several tattoo parlors in New York City. In them were hundreds of designs from which a customer could choose: cartoon characters, animals, oriental symbols, gothic forms, and novel **originals. Intricate abstract designs are done with black ink only, according to the artists we interviewed.** Color, they said, is rarely used. Although the practice is an old one, it didn't get to Europe until the latter half of the 19th century, brought there by sailors who had discovered it in the South Pacific. It has remained associated with sailors ever since. The word itself, tattoo, is Polynesian and was introduced to the English language by the explorer Capt. James Cook (who also gave us the word taboo).





People get tattoos for various reasons. "some view it as a rite of passage to adulthood," one of the interviewees said. "It gives them a sense of belonging; for some others, it is an affirmation of love." Whatever the reasons, everyone we interviewed agreed that the first tattoo was marked by nervous anticipation and expectation of impending pain. This is what five people in various walks of life had to say about their experiences and reasons for getting tattoos..

Edgar Feliciano, construction worker

"This tribal tattoo is my own design. It was inspired by the Apache tribes of North America where only warriors wore them. I see myself as a warrior in the urban jungle. The marks are always done in black ink and the lines never touch. The tattoo was done in three, six hours intervals totaling 18 hours and it is still a work in progress. I'll add more to the design soon. I suggest you allow proper time for the tattoo to heal. I wanted this entire design completed over a weekend even though I was advised not to by my tattoo artist. He suggested I do such a large area over a period of time and I wish I had listened. The trauma to the area resulted in tremendous swelling, temporary paralysis of the neck, and an unbearable pain that kept me up all night. But as much as I have suffered, I would do it all over again."

Woody Hughes, recording artist

"I did a lot of research before I got my first tattoo. I read every thing I could get my hands on regarding design, technique, and risk. It is important to feel the artist is competent. That reassurance makes your first time a little less agonizing. My favorite tattoo parlors are Mr. Leo's on 125th and Lexington Avenue in Harlem and Sacred Tattoo on Canal Street in Lower Manhattan. My best friend and I have large matching tattoos on our right arms that read BOYZ 4 LIFE. It is a tribute to our friendship and bonds us forever. Tattoos tell a lot about a person. I have three Chinese symbols on my neck that represent love, peace, and prosperity which are

the principles I live by. In addition, on my chest I have a lion. I see myself as a ferocious king of the jungle. The other is a tarantula on my pelvis. They are viewed as dangerous and strike without warning just as I do."

Terrance Taitt, city employee

"I have bar codes tattooed on my neck, and on my left arm is the inside of a mechanical arm when the flesh is torn away. It is very sci-fi Terminator 2. I also have a cross tattooed on the length of my entire back and the width of my shoulders. My favorites are BOYZ 4 LIFE on my right arm and HARLEM WORLD 112 on my stomach. These remind me of homeboy roots."

Jyll Hubbard

"I got my first tattoos fifteen years ago before it became a fad. They were my own personal art. The several that I have acquired were all small and discreet. I never felt the need to advertise or wear my heart on my sleeve, so to speak. Each of my tattoos are significant and read like a blue print of my life. As a young adult, I liked dating, mating, destroying my boyfriends and moving on. I felt in control. I had power and it felt damn good. That is why my very first tattoo was a black widow spider and her web. Soon I opted for the next tattoo which is an eye at the back of my neck, so that I could watch my back. Fifteen years later, coupled with a lot of growth, I tattooed the symbol of the OHM [the sound of meditation as practiced by the Buddhist] on the inside of my wrist. Now I am at peace; I am with peace and the journey is still not over. What's next?"

Tim Fleder, hospital employee

"I feel I have an explosive personality--not in a bad way. My shoulder is etched in black ink with my astrological sign, Taurus the Bull inside the Sun, a fire ball of power and combustible energy. In addition, I have a big cat that is part panther and part tiger. It is sleek and always on the prowl, just as I am. V

So you want a tattoo? Here are 10 things to consider!

Q. How old should I be before I get a tattoo?
A. It is a major life decision and should be made by a mature mind at age 21. However there are temporary tattoos available that last about a week if you want to experiment.

Q. Will it be painful?
A. The most sensitive parts of the body are the bony areas--ankles and the rib cage. Fleshy parts are less painful.

Q. What design do you want and will it offend others?
A. Yes it is a personal expression of yourself, but be aware of the negative consequences. Example "KKK"

Q. Where would you like it to be placed?
A. Any area that is easily covered by clothing is a good option

Q. What color inks are better for darker skins?
A. The best contrast colors are greens and reds. Avoid "brights" and pastels.

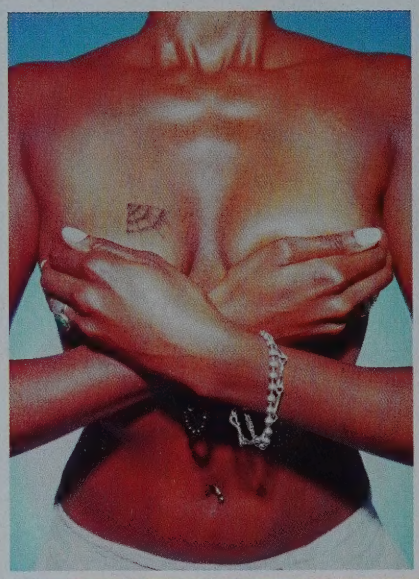
Q. What about after care?
A. Don't expose a new tattoo to the sun or chlorinated pool water for 30 days.

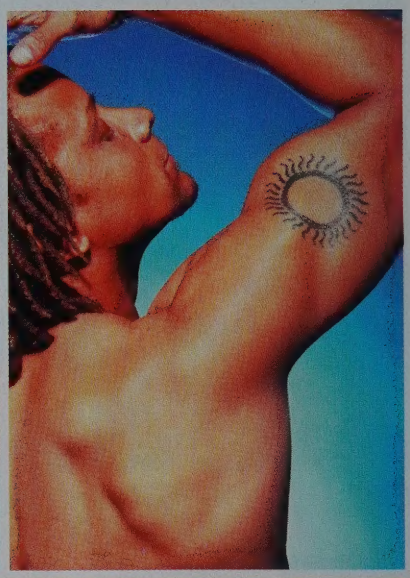
Q. Should I tattoo a lovers name?
A. Don't do it in black ink. Opt for a color. They fade in time just in case your love does too.

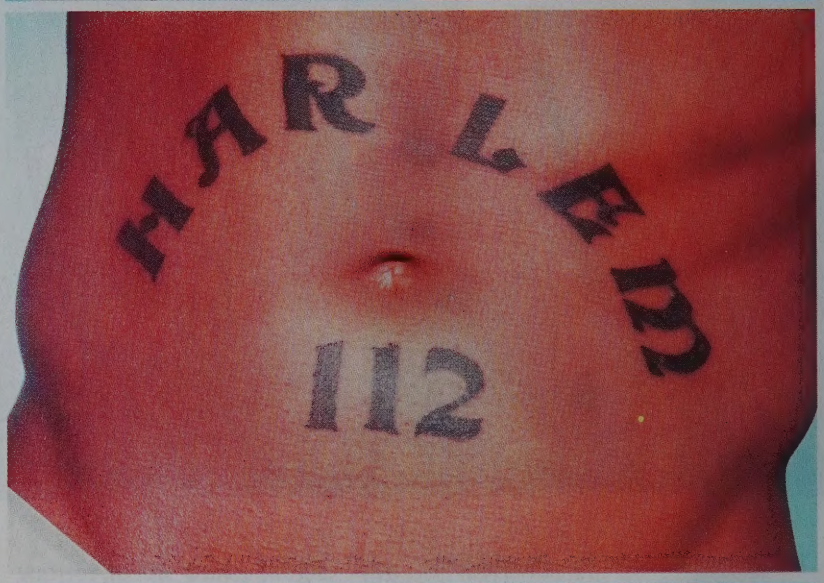
Q. Can I have it removed?
A. Laser therapy can remove a tattoo at a cost of $300 per square inch and it takes about seven sessions.

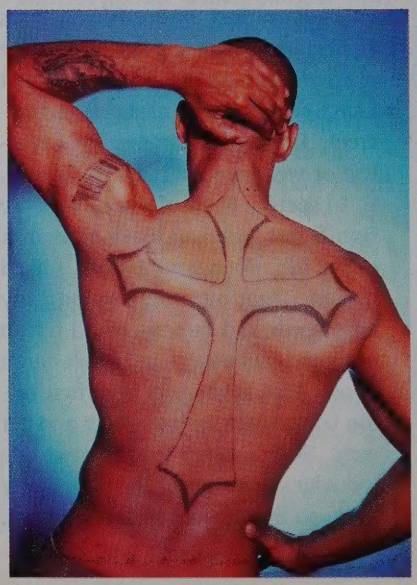
Q. Can I cover it up with make-up?
A. Yes. A full coverage make-up call Demblend is design to camouflage scars and radial skin discoloration. It is available at better department and cosmetic outlets.

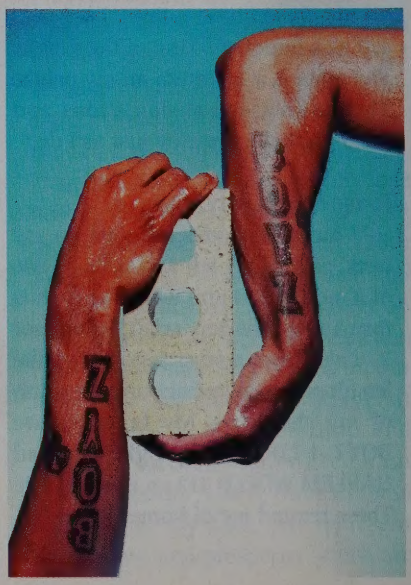
Q. Will a tattoo affect your job security?
A. It is possible that some people may have a prejudice against tattoos.









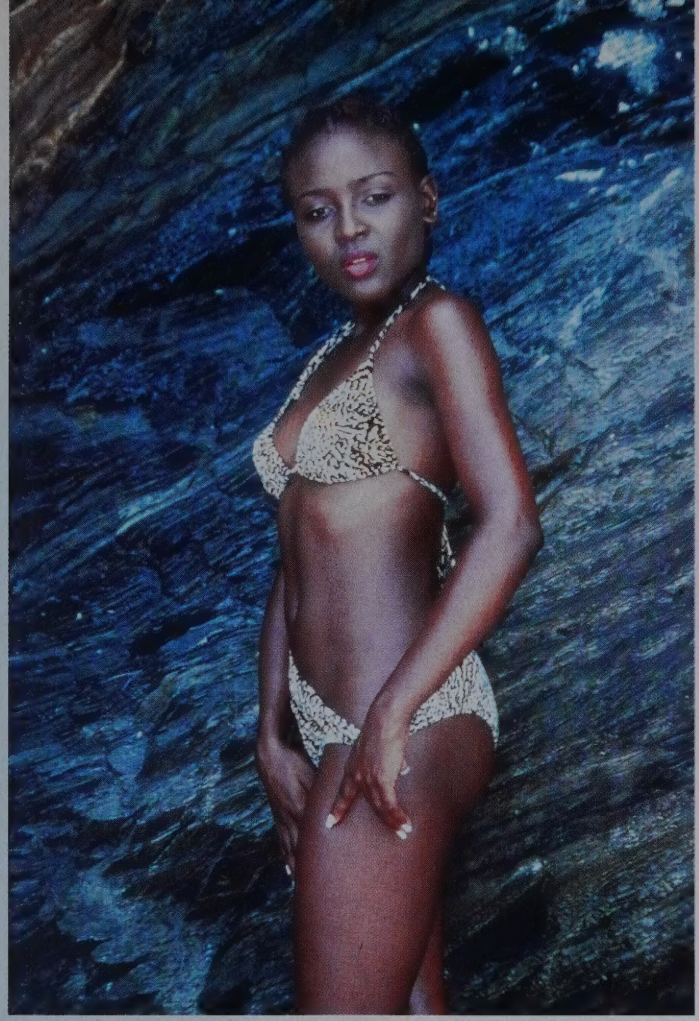


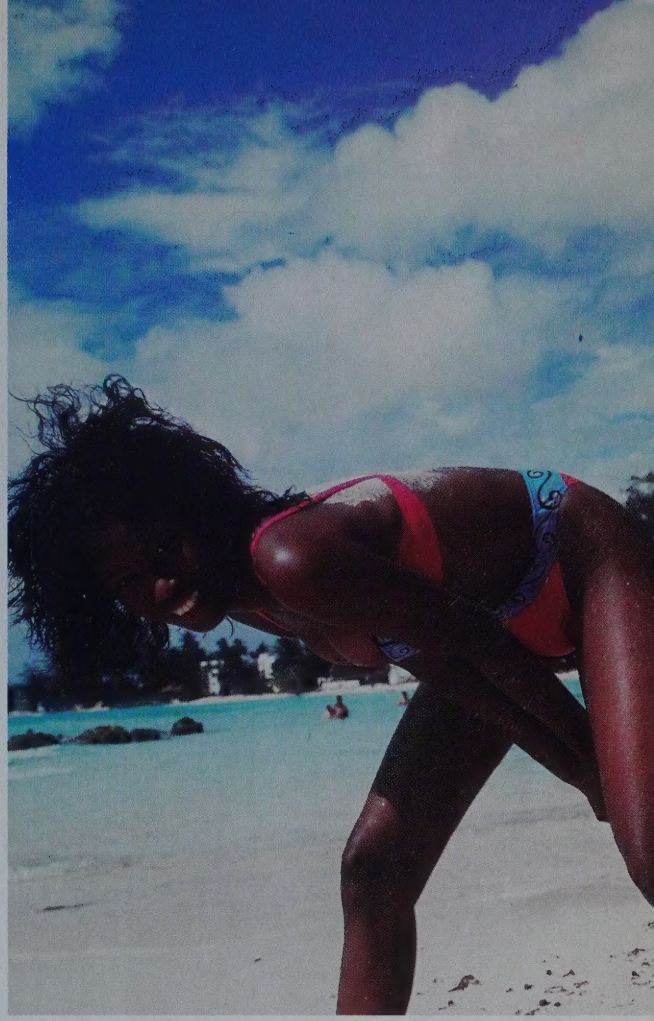
Kimberly Purnell, 1-3,8,9 ; Barry Gordin 4,7

1. Rupaul & MTV's Ananda Lewis at GLAAD media awards NYC 2. The Lady chablis & VH1's Roshumba Williams 3. Paris Barclay (c), set director of NYPD Blues, and fashion icon Lloyd Boston (r) , author of "Men of Color" and a friend were on hand to celebrate the launch of CODE Magazine. 4. (l-r) Jehan Agrama, co-chair of GLAAD Media Awards, Anne Heche, Whoopi Goldberg, Ellen Degeneres, Co-chair Michael Keegan 5. Venus entertainment editor, Kimberly Purnell and Rev. Frieda of Unity-Los Angeles at New York GLAAD media awards. 6. Grandma Funk 7. Sharon Stone and GLAAD's 1999 Vanguard recipient, Whoopi Goldberg 8. CODE fashion editor, Timothy Snell with model, Mitchel El-Mandy 9. (l-r) BethAnn Hardaway, mother of actor Kadeem Haraway, Kimberly Purnell, Entertainment editor for Venus and Tyson Beckford.

Beauty and the Beach

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN DRAKES





Whether you're burned out from bar hopping, or from clocking in on the job, a Caribbean vacation can fix you up -- every bit of you -- like nothing else. Caribbean beaches offer more than sea and sand. They are also places to renew the body from head to toe and calm the soul. On the three beaches below you can change your life and have fun, too. Here's how.

Miami Beach, Barbados

British traditions haunt this island, the supersonic Concorde lands every Saturday and sugar cane is still king. Thanks to the bands Krsofyah and Square One, Caribbean music representing a cultural mosaic is becoming Barbados' second largest export.

Running on the beach's powdery sand reduces muscle stress; your ankle goes through a greater range of motion which lengthens and stretches the calves. You will feel sorer after the run than before it. A half hour run burns 240 calories.

Vigorous walking barefoot in sand is a natural way to exfoliate dead skin from your soles--enhance the effect at bath-time whisks of pumice, the rock that created most of the islands in the first place.

Las Cuevas Bay, Trinidad

In this nation, steel drums are used to make music and Carnival revelers step to a Caribbean beat that those in Rio might envy. Trinidad is also the first Caribbean nation to host the Miss Universe Pageant, winning the title twice. Why not? Fine women and men abound on this beautiful island. It's for good reason that Aphrodite, the

Greek goddess of love, beauty and fertility, sprang from sea foam off the coast of an island. Because of its concentration of salts and minerals, sea water has regenerative powers. Anyone in Las Cuevas will tell you that. Nicks, cuts, and blemishes heal quickly when exposed to it.

When you leave these regenerative waters and take a walk or run on the beach, you firm gluteus muscles. An hour-long brisk walk burns 270 calories.

Dickenson Bay, Antigua

This tropical hot spot is for young lovers and older ones too, seeking souvenirs of remembrance. However, when you want to stretch beyond the wet bar, Antigua has 365 sandy banks to nurture your spirit.

After bakeries, beaches have the second most comforting scent known to man. Its odors, particularly that of sand, seem to promote relaxation. This happens by way of biochemical reactions tapping into the brain's alpha waves, lowering blood pressure.

A sea breeze's transoceanic journey has cleansed it of atmospheric pollutants, making it easier to breathe for allergy suffering visitors. Negative ions in sea air are natural mood elevators and diminish both stress and insomnia.

They also reap who only sit and listen. The ocean's sound, especially with closed eyes, is like listening to the world breathing next to you. Let's call this emotional therapy.

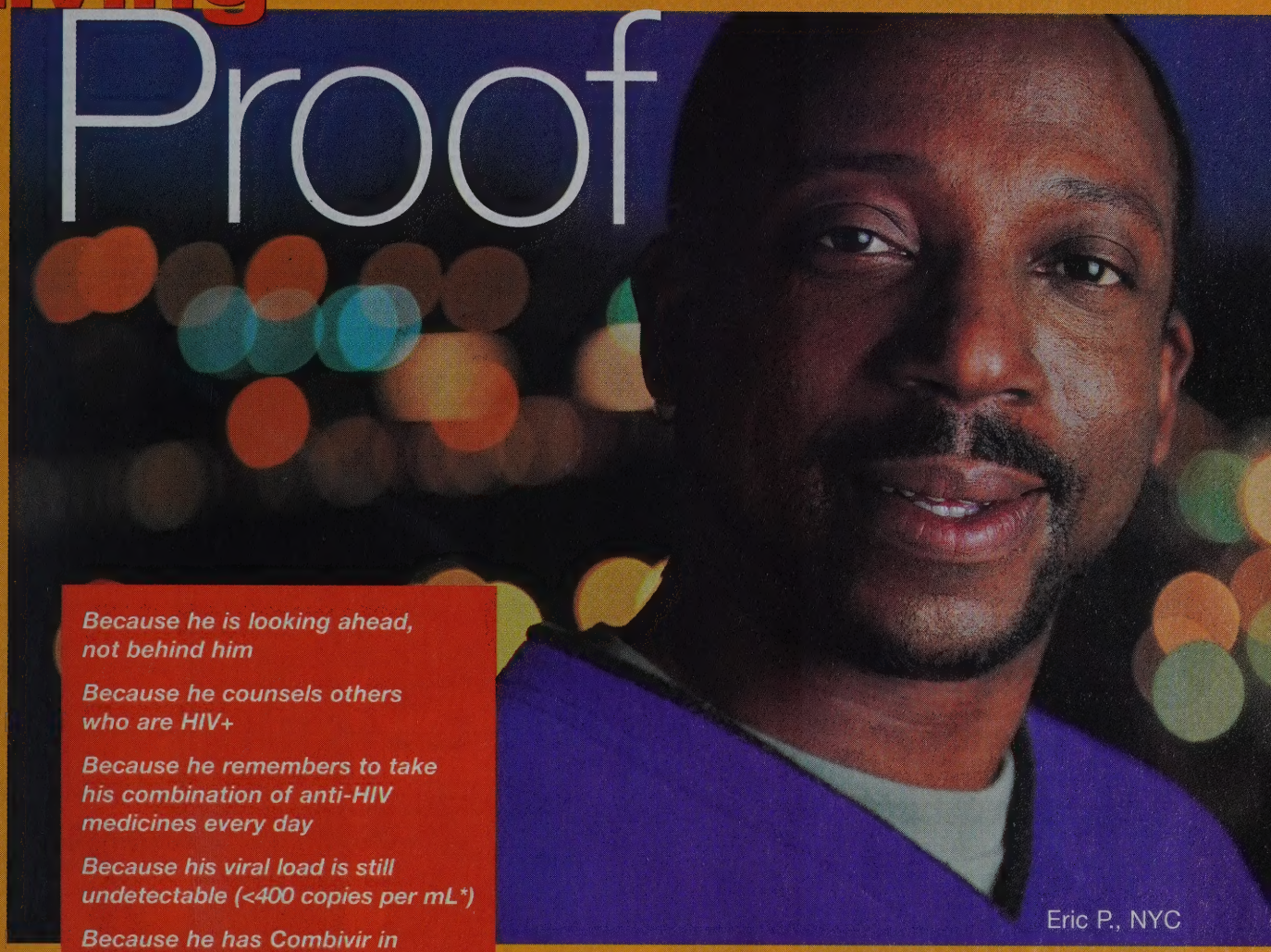
Beach volleyball tones deltoids and biceps and burns 90 calories each half hour. On the other hand, hoisting a pina colada from table to mouth, back and forth, fifteen reps, adds 262 calories. Burn or add? You make your choices.

One of the most sensuous parts of the body is our lips. On an idyllic beach they tend to curl into a smile. Protect them with zinc oxide or carmex. V

Source Conde Nast Traveler

PROVEN POWER FOR HIV

Living Proof



Because he is looking ahead, not behind him

Because he counsels others who are HIV+

Because he remembers to take his combination of anti-HIV medicines every day

Because his viral load is still undetectable (<400 copies per mL)*

Because he has Combivir in his combination therapy—proven to help people with HIV live longer, healthier lives[1,2]

Ask your doctor about

Combivir®

lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg

Smarter Together

ONE TABLET TWICE A DAY

2 powerful anti-HIV medicines in one tablet, taken twice a day with or without food

SAFETY INFORMATION

- Make sure to see your doctor regularly because serious side effects can occur, such as muscle damage and a decrease in red and white blood cells
- Rarely, a buildup of acid in the blood and an enlarged liver, including fatal cases, have been seen
- The most frequent side effects are headache, upset stomach, malaise or fatigue, and runny nose

CALL 1-800-760-5912 for information or visit our Web site at www.treathiv.com

Glaxo Wellcome HIV
A division of Glaxo Wellcome Inc.
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
Web site: www.glaxowellcome.com

Please see brief summary for Combivir on the following page.

* Roche Amplicor HIV-1 MONITOR® Test

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BRIEF SUMMARY

COMBIVIR® Tablets (lamivudine/zidovudine tablets)

The following is a brief summary only; see full prescribing information for complete product information.

WARNING: ZIDOVUDINE, ONE OF THE TWO ACTIVE INGREDIENTS IN COMBIVIR, HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH HEMATOLOGIC TOXICITY INCLUDING NEUTROPENIA AND SEVERE ANEMIA, PARTICULARLY IN PATIENTS WITH ADVANCED HIV DISEASE (SEE WARNINGS). PROLONGED USE OF ZIDOVUDINE HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH SYMPTOMATIC MYOPATHY.

LACTIC ACIDOSIS AND SEVERE HEPATOMEGALY WITH STEATOSIS, INCLUDING FATAL CASES, HAVE BEEN REPORTED WITH THE USE OF NUCLEOSIDE ANALOGUES ALONE OR IN COMBINATION, INCLUDING LAMIVUDINE, ZIDOVUDINE, AND OTHER ANTIRETROVIRALS (SEE WARNINGS).

INDICATIONS AND USAGE: COMBIVIR is indicated for the treatment of HIV infection.

Description of Clinical Studies: ***COMBIVIR:*** There have been no clinical trials conducted with COMBIVIR. See CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY for information about bioequivalence. One COMBIVIR Tablet given twice a day is an alternative regimen to EPIVIR Tablets 150 mg twice a day plus RETROVIR 600 mg per day in divided doses.

Lamivudine Plus Zidovudine: The NUCB3007 (CAESAR) study was conducted using EPIVIR 150-mg Tablets (150 mg b.i.d.) and RETROVIR 100-mg Capsules (2 x 100 mg t.i.d.). CAESAR was a multicenter, double-blind, placebo-controlled study comparing continued current therapy [zidovudine alone (62% of patients) or zidovudine with didanosine or zalcitabine (38% of patients)] to the addition of EPIVIR or EPIVIR plus an investigational non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor, randomized 1:2:1. A total of 1816 HIV-infected adults with 25 to 250 (median 122) CD4 cells/mm³ at baseline were enrolled: median age was 36 years, 87% were male, 84% were nucleoside-experienced, and 16% were therapy-naive. The median duration on study was 12 months. Results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of Patients (%) With At Least One HIV Disease-Progression Event or Death

Endpoint	Current Therapy (n = 460)	EPIVIR plus Current Therapy (n = 896)	EPIVIR plus a NNRTI* plus Current Therapy (n = 460)
HIV progression or death	90 (19.6%)	86 (9.6%)	41 (8.9%)
Death	27 (5.9%)	23 (2.6%)	14 (3.0%)

*An investigational non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor not approved in the United States.

CONTRAINDICATIONS: COMBIVIR Tablets are contraindicated in patients with previously demonstrated clinically significant hypersensitivity to any of the components of the product.

WARNINGS: COMBIVIR is a fixed-dose combination of lamivudine and zidovudine. Ordinarily, COMBIVIR should not be administered concomitantly with either lamivudine or zidovudine.

The complete prescribing information for all agents being considered for use with COMBIVIR should be consulted before combination therapy with COMBIVIR is initiated.

Bone Marrow Suppression: COMBIVIR should be used with caution in patients who have bone marrow compromise evidenced by granulocyte count <1000 cells/mm³ or hemoglobin <9.5 g/dL (see ADVERSE REACTIONS).

Frequent blood counts are strongly recommended in patients with advanced HIV disease who are treated with COMBIVIR. For HIV-infected individuals and patients with asymptomatic or early HIV disease, periodic blood counts are recommended.

Lactic Acidosis/Severe Hepatomegaly with Steatosis: Lactic acidosis and severe hepatomegaly with steatosis, including fatal cases, have been reported with the use of nucleoside analogues alone or in combination, including lamivudine, zidovudine, and other antiretrovirals. A majority of these cases have been in women. Obesity and prolonged nucleoside exposure may be risk factors. Particular caution should be exercised when administering COMBIVIR to any patient with known risk factors for liver disease; however, cases have also been reported in patients with no known risk factors. Treatment with COMBIVIR should be suspended in any patient who develops clinical or laboratory findings suggestive of lactic acidosis or pronounced hepatotoxicity (which may include hepatomegaly and steatosis even in the absence of marked transaminase elevations).

Myopathy: Myopathy and myositis, with pathological changes similar to that produced by HIV disease, have been associated with prolonged use of zidovudine, and therefore may occur with therapy with COMBIVIR.

PRECAUTIONS:

General: Reduction of doses of lamivudine is recommended for patients with low body weight (less than 50 kg or 110 lb); therefore patients with low body weight should not receive COMBIVIR.

Patients With HIV and Hepatitis B Virus Coinfection: In clinical trials and postmarketing experience, some patients with HIV infection who have chronic liver disease due to hepatitis B virus infection experienced clinical or laboratory evidence of recurrent hepatitis upon discontinuation of lamivudine. Consequences may be more severe in patients with decompensated liver disease.

Patients With Impaired Renal Function: Reduction of the dosages of lamivudine and zidovudine is recommended for patients with impaired renal function. Patients with creatinine clearance ≤50 mL/min should not receive COMBIVIR.

Information for Patients: COMBIVIR is not a cure for HIV infection and patients may continue to experience illnesses associated with HIV infection, including opportunistic infections. Patients should be advised that the use of COMBIVIR has not been shown to reduce the risk of transmission of HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination. Patients should be informed that the major toxicities of COMBIVIR are neutropenia and/or anemia. They should be told of the extreme importance of having their blood counts followed closely while on therapy, especially for patients with advanced HIV disease. Patients should be advised of the importance of taking COMBIVIR as it is prescribed.

Drug Interactions: Coadministration of ganciclovir, interferon-alpha, and other bone marrow suppressive or cytotoxic agents may increase the hematologic toxicity of zidovudine (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY section of full prescribing information).

Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, and Impairment of Fertility: ***Carcinogenicity:***

Lamivudine: Lamivudine long-term carcinogenicity studies in mice and rats showed no evidence of carcinogenic potential at exposures up to 10 times (mice) and 58 times (rats) those observed in humans at the recommended therapeutic dose.

Zidovudine: Zidovudine was administered orally at three dosage levels to separate groups of mice and rats (60 females and 60 males in each group). Initial single daily doses were 30, 60, and 120 mg/kg per day in mice and 80, 220, and 600 mg/kg per day in rats. The doses in mice were reduced to 20, 30, and 40 mg/kg per day after day 90 because of treatment-related anemia, whereas in rats only the high dose was reduced to 450 mg/kg per day on day 91 and then to 300 mg/kg per day on day 279.

In mice, seven late-appearing (after 19 months) vaginal neoplasms (five nonmetastasizing squamous cell carcinomas, one squamous cell papilloma, and one squamous polyp) occurred in animals given the highest dose. One late-appearing squamous cell papilloma occurred in the vagina of a middle-dose animal. No vaginal tumors were found at the lowest dose.

In rats, two late-appearing (after 20 months), nonmetastasizing vaginal squamous cell carcinomas occurred in animals given the highest dose. No vaginal tumors occurred at the low or middle dose in rats. No other drug-related tumors were observed in either sex of either species.

At doses that produced tumors in mice and rats, the estimated drug exposure (as measured by AUC) was approximately three times (mouse) and 24 times (rat) the estimated human exposure at the recommended therapeutic dose of 100 mg every 4 hours.

Two transplacental carcinogenicity studies were conducted in mice. One study administered zidovudine at doses of 20 mg/kg per day or 40 mg/kg per day from gestation day 10 through parturition and lactation with dosing continuing in offspring for 24 months postnatally. The doses of zidovudine employed in this study produced zidovudine exposures approximately three times the estimated human exposure at recommended doses. After 24 months, at the highest dose, an increase in incidence of vaginal tumors was noted with no increase in tumors in the liver or lung or any other organ in either gender. These findings are consistent with results of the standard oral carcinogenicity study in mice, as described earlier. A second study administered zidovudine at maximum tolerated doses of 12.5 mg/day or 25 mg/day (~1000 mg/kg nonpregnant body weight or ~450 mg/kg of term body weight) to pregnant mice from days 12 through 18 of gestation. There was an increase in the number of tumors in the lung, liver, and female reproductive tracts in the offspring of mice receiving the higher dose level of zidovudine.

It is not known how predictive the results of rodent carcinogenicity studies may be for humans.

Mutagenicity: Lamivudine: Lamivudine was negative in a microbial mutagenicity screen, in an in vitro cell transformation assay, in a rat micronucleus test, in a rat bone marrow cytogenetic assay, and in an assay for unscheduled DNA synthesis in rat liver. It was mutagenic in a L5178Y/TK$^{+/-}$ mouse lymphoma assay and clastogenic in a cytogenetic assay using cultured human lymphocytes.

Zidovudine: Zidovudine was mutagenic in a L5178Y/TK$^{+/-}$ mouse lymphoma assay, positive in an in vitro cell transformation assay, clastogenic in a cytogenetic assay using cultured human lymphocytes, and positive in mouse and rat micronucleus tests after repeated doses. It was negative in a cytogenetic study in rats given a single dose.

Impairment of Fertility: Lamivudine: In a study of reproductive performance, lamivudine, administered to male and female rats at doses up to 130 times the usual adult dose based on body surface area considerations, revealed no evidence of impaired fertility (judged by conception rates) and no effect on the survival, growth, and development to weaning of the offspring.

Zidovudine: Zidovudine, administered to male and female rats at doses up to 7 times the usual adult dose based on body surface area considerations, had no effect on fertility judged by conception rates.

Pregnancy: Pregnancy Category C.

COMBIVIR® Tablets (lamivudine/zidovudine tablets): There are no adequate and well-controlled studies of COMBIVIR in pregnant women. Reproduction studies with lamivudine and zidovudine have been performed in animals (see Lamivudine and Zidovudine sections below). COMBIVIR should be used during pregnancy only if the potential benefits outweigh the risks.

Lamivudine: Reproduction studies with orally administered lamivudine have been performed in rats and rabbits at 130 and 60 times, respectively, the usual adult dose (based on relative body surface area) and have revealed no evidence of teratogenicity. Some evidence of early embryolethality was seen in the rabbit at doses similar to those produced by the usual adult dose and higher, but there was no indication of this effect in the rat at orally administered doses up to 130 times the usual adult dose. Studies in pregnant rats and rabbits showed that lamivudine is transferred to the fetus through the placenta.

Zidovudine: Reproduction studies with orally administered zidovudine in the rat and in the rabbit at doses up to 500 mg/kg per day revealed no evidence of teratogenicity with zidovudine. Zidovudine treatment resulted in embryo/fetal toxicity as evidenced by an increase in the incidence of fetal resorptions in rats given 150 or 450 mg/kg per day and rabbits given 500 mg/kg per day. The doses used in the teratology studies resulted in peak zidovudine plasma concentrations (after one-half of the daily dose) in rats 66 to 226 times, and in rabbits 12 to 87 times, mean steady-state peak human plasma concentrations (after one-sixth of the daily dose) achieved with the recommended daily dose (100 mg every 4 hours). In an additional teratology study in rats, a dose of 3000 mg/kg per day (very near the oral median lethal dose in rats of 3683 mg/kg) caused marked maternal toxicity and an increase in the incidence of fetal malformations. This dose resulted in peak zidovudine plasma concentrations 350 times peak human plasma concentrations. No evidence of teratogenicity was seen in this experiment at doses of 600 mg/kg per day or less. Two rodent carcinogenicity studies were conducted (see Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility).

Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry: To monitor maternal-fetal outcomes of pregnant women exposed to COMBIVIR and other antiretroviral agents, an Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry has been established. Physicians are encouraged to register patients by calling 1-800-258-4263.

Nursing Mothers: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that HIV-infected mothers not breastfeed their infants to avoid risking postnatal transmission of HIV infection.

COMBIVIR: Zidovudine is excreted in breast milk (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY: Pharmacokinetics: Nursing Mothers subsection of full prescribing information); however, no data are available on COMBIVIR or lamivudine. Therefore, there is a potential for adverse effects in nursing infants. **Mothers should be instructed not to breastfeed if they are receiving COMBIVIR.**

Pediatric Use: COMBIVIR should not be administered to pediatric patients less than 12 years of age because it is a fixed-dose combination that cannot be adjusted for this patient population.

ADVERSE REACTIONS:

Lamivudine Plus Zidovudine Administered As Separate Formulations: In four randomized, controlled trials of EPIVIR 300 mg per day plus RETROVIR 600 mg per day, the following selected clinical and laboratory adverse events were observed (see Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2: Selected Clinical Adverse Events (≥5% Frequency) in Four Controlled Clinical Trials With EPIVIR 300 mg/day and RETROVIR 600 mg/day

Adverse Event		EPIVIR plus RETROVIR (n = 251)
Body as a whole	Headache	35%
	Malaise & fatigue	27%
	Fever or chills	10%
Digestive	Nausea	33%
	Diarrhea	18%
	Nausea & vomiting	13%
	Anorexia and/or decreased appetite	10%
	Abdominal pain	9%
	Abdominal cramps	6%
	Dyspepsia	5%
Nervous system	Neuropathy	12%
	Insomnia & other sleep disorders	11%
	Dizziness	10%
	Depressive disorders	9%
Respiratory	Nasal signs & symptoms	20%
	Cough	18%
Skin	Skin rashes	9%
Musculoskeletal	Musculoskeletal pain	12%
	Myalgia	8%
	Arthralgia	5%

Pancreatitis was observed in three of the 656 adult patients (<0.5%) who received EPIVIR in controlled clinical trials. Selected laboratory abnormalities observed during therapy are listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Frequencies of Selected Laboratory Abnormalities Among Adults in Four Controlled Clinical Trials of EPIVIR 300 mg/day plus RETROVIR 600 mg/day*

Test (Abnormal Level)	EPIVIR plus RETROVIR % (n)
Neutropenia (ANC<750/mm³)	7.2% (237)
Anemia (Hgb<8.0 g/dL)	2.9% (241)
Thrombocytopenia (platelets<50,000/mm³)	0.4% (240)
ALT (>5.0 x ULN)	3.7% (241)
AST (>5.0 x ULN)	1.7% (241)
Bilirubin (>2.5 x ULN)	0.8% (241)
Amylase (>2.0 x ULN)	4.2% (72)

ULN = Upper limit of normal.
ANC = Absolute neutrophil count.
n = Number of patients assessed.
*Frequencies of these laboratory abnormalities were higher in patients with mild laboratory abnormalities at baseline.

Observed During Clinical Practice: In addition to adverse events reported from clinical trials, the following events have been identified during post-approval use of EPIVIR and/or RETROVIR. Because they are reported voluntarily from a population of unknown size, estimates of frequency cannot be made. These events have been chosen for inclusion due to a combination of their seriousness, frequency of reporting, or potential causal connection to EPIVIR and/or RETROVIR.

Endocrine and Metabolic: Hyperglycemia.

General: Sensitization reactions (including anaphylaxis), vasculitis.

Hepatobiliary Tract and Pancreas: Lactic acidosis and hepatic steatosis (see WARNINGS), pancreatitis.

Musculoskeletal: Muscle weakness, CPK elevation, rhabdomyolysis.

Nervous: Seizures.

Skin: Alopecia, erythema multiforme, Stevens-Johnson syndrome, urticaria.

OVERDOSAGE:

COMBIVIR: There is no known antidote for COMBIVIR.

Lamivudine: One case of an adult ingesting 6 grams of lamivudine was reported; there were no clinical signs or symptoms noted and hematologic tests remained normal. It is not known whether lamivudine can be removed by peritoneal dialysis or hemodialysis.

Zidovudine: Acute overdoses of zidovudine have been reported in pediatric patients and adults. These involved exposures up to 50 grams. The only consistent findings were nausea and vomiting. Other reported occurrences included headache, dizziness, drowsiness, lethargy, confusion, and one report of a grand mal seizure. Hematologic changes were transient. All patients recovered. Hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis appear to have a negligible effect on the removal of zidovudine while elimination of its primary metabolite, GZDV, is enhanced.

DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION: The recommended oral dose of COMBIVIR for adults and adolescents (at least 12 years of age) is one tablet (containing 150 mg of lamivudine and 300 mg of zidovudine) twice daily.

Dose Adjustment: Because it is a fixed-dose combination, COMBIVIR should not be prescribed for patients requiring dosage adjustment such as those with reduced renal function (creatinine clearance ≤50 mL/min), those with low body weight (<50 kg or 110 lb), or those experiencing dose-limiting adverse events.

US Patent Nos. 5,047,407; 4,818,538; 4,828,838; 4,724,232; 4,833,130; and 4,837,208

GlaxoWellcome

Glaxo Wellcome Inc.
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

Lamivudine is manufactured under agreement from BioChem Pharma Inc.
Laval, Quebec, Canada

March 1999/RL-685

References: 1. CAESAR Coordinating Committee. Randomised trial of addition of lamivudine or lamivudine plus loviride to zidovudine-containing regimens for patients with HIV-1 infection: the CAESAR trial. *Lancet.* 1997;349:1413-1421. **2.** Hammer SM, Squires KE, Hughes MD, et al. A controlled trial of two nucleoside analogues plus indinavir in persons with human immunodeficiency virus infection and CD4 cell counts of 200 per cubic millimeter or less. *N Engl J Med.* 1997;337:725-733.

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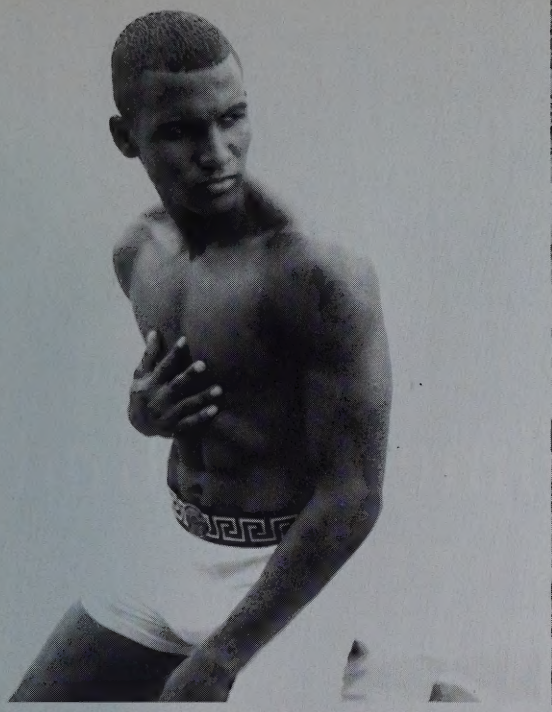

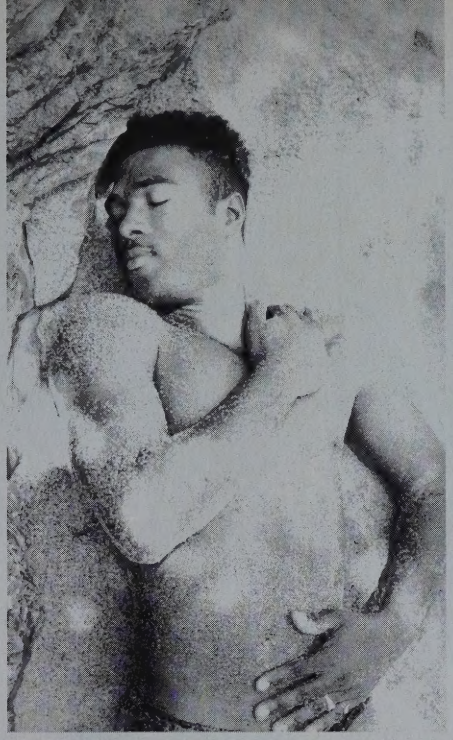

Touch Therapy

compiled by Sean Drakes

"Massage is all about preventive maintenance," says Los Angeles board certified masseuse Gregory Lewis. "It helps relax muscle spasms and reduce tension; massage helps push out toxins and produces blood cells. As you may know, one symptom of diabetes is poor circulation." Lewis an independent specialist and free-lancer at Hollywood's Burk Williams day spa, approaches massage from a healing/therapeutic viewpoint. Below, he offers a short list of massage benefits.

Invigorating Muscles

While working out oxygen must get to the muscle to help it form. Working the muscle in a circular motion helps oxygen flow--it won't buff the muscle up but gives it tone. It's also a good way to get dormant muscles active again.

Relieving Tension

Regardless of age and gender, most of us carry stress in the upper back, shoulders, and neck; we sometimes carry it in the head, resulting in headaches. After weekly full body massages you will notice the difference. Luckily, there is no such thing as too much massage. Pressing lightly on pressure points (where tendons or muscles connect with each other) in your temple, hands, eyebrows, skull and neck can offer speedy relief

Promoting Better Breathing

Too often we take breathing for granted. Consequently, we develop, or ignore, bad breathing habits. For example, most of us don't breathe deeply and evenly. Just being conscientious of breathing helps to reduce stress. Often our stress registers unknowingly on our faces. We see it when we observe drivers as they pass you. They don't know how uptight they look.

The best time to take a massage is when you can continue relaxing after the massage has been given. "Human touch is just so important in the realm of it emanating from a place in one's heart where there's no expectations."--Body Work by Gregg.

Ruth Ellis
Ageless Beauty Timeless Mind

by Anderson Jones

"Follow the leader," says the tiny woman who greets me at the elevator with a firm handshake on the 13th floor of her apartment building. At first, it's not quite clear that this woman in a pair of drawstring pants and a bright red flannel camp shirt with a natural, graying afro is Ruth Ellis. At gay pride events she still attends, Ellis is often introduced as "The Oldest Lesbian in the World." But Ruth isn't so sure. "I say, 'You don't know that! There's some lesbians who are just still in the closet.' "

Ruth will turn 100 next month. So how could this woman with a mostly unlined face be her? you wonder. She's way too sprightly. But as we make our way down two

BIG AS LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

Ruth Ellis with Detroit socialite Sandy White

hallways to a neat, roomy apartment that overlooks downtown Detroit you realize it can't be anyone else. She's bemused that anyone's interested in her story at all. "I just tell everybody, 'I can't understand it,' " she says, laughing. "I'm just an ordinary old black lady." But there's nothing ordinary about her.

On the eve of her 100th birthday, Ellis shows no signs of slowing down. She attended Black Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in Washington, D.C., for an early birthday party with some black lesbians who just adore her. Their birthday card from last year, a giant poster board folded in two, has a place of honor underneath Ruth's TV set. It's covered in signatures and lipstick smacks and phone numbers and email addresses. "Did you ever see so many names?" Ellis asks. After D.C. she plans to do a workshop in Muncie, Indiana (mostly she just answers questions about what it was like to be a lesbian back in the day), then maybe she'll hit San Francisco for Gay Pride and perhaps the Music Festival in Hart, Michigan where she is pretty much regarded as royalty.

Her apartment reflects her unwitting celebrity and her status as a national treasure. There are newspaper clippings that mark her return to her hometown in Springfield, Ill. A local paper quizzed her about race riots in the Detroit. There are her bowling trophies, a portrait of Ellis as a young lady, photos of past girlfriends and more than a few wannabe girlfriends. "I've got a slew of them," Ruth says. "We're not intimate but they're just crazy about me. I'm on the Internet. I'm on the email. What more can I ask?" In one corner rests an exercise bike she still hops on occasionally. There's also her laminated high school diploma from 1919, an Honorary Doctorate of Humanities, a Centenarian Award from the city and a Wayne County Resolution. Why was Ruth so honored? "Just for being me, I guess," she says, with a shrug of her shoulders.

Ruth Ellis comes from extraordinary stock as well. Although her mother died when she was 12, her father was the first black man hired as a postal carrier in Springfield. He made 37 cents an hour. She has outlived her three brothers, only one married and another became a doctor.

"I'VE GOT A SLEW OF WANNABE GIRLFRIENDS. WE'RE NOT INTIMATE BUT THEY'RE JUST CRAZY ABOUT ME!"

She suspected he was gay, too. "I don't think Harry even had a girlfriend," Ruth recalls, sitting back in a well-worn La-Z-Boy that nearly swallows her up. "He was more toward men but there was nothing said about it." Ruth suspects her father probably knew about her burgeoning sexuality because he heard her fooling around with a girlfriend who spent the night. The next morning he said, "The next time you gals make that much noise I'm gonna put you out." But Ruth's interest in girls may have been a relief. "I think he was kind of glad that I hung on with the women instead of the men," says Ruth. "I think he's kind of glad because without a mother I think he was afraid I would come up with a baby. He didn't allow me to look at the boys. He said, 'Books and boys don't go together.' That was his philosophy." Girls, however, didn't matter.

Ruth says the book, *The Well of Loneliness*, helped her deal with her own loneliness in high school and perhaps healed the despair after she developed a crush on her gym teacher. A Portuguese woman, she was one of the few whites who weren't openly hostile to her. She knew she was gay but experimented with men. A married man in fact. "He was very nice, but I didn't enjoy it," Ruth says. She never wanted children and pretty much decided that's all men could do for her. She says, "If I don't want any children don't fool with things that make children."

Ellis is no activist but after leaving Springfield for Detroit, Ruth's Oakland Avenue home that she shared with Ceciline "Babe" Franklin, her one and only long-term partner of more than 30 years, was the hot spot for much of gay Motown for those decades when blacks weren't welcome in white clubs, gay or straight. Dancing was pretty muchthe rule and Ruth still does a mean Hustle.

"I think if straight people would get in touch with some gay people they'll see they're no different from anybody else," Ruth says. "We're human beings. We go to church. We

do everything they do. We don't know what they're doing in their sex life. I don't see why they hate us so." Ruth was lucky.

Although she comes from a time in our nation's history generally regarded as unenlightened she was never harassed, spat on, teased or otherwise tortured for loving women. "I had it easy," she says. "I haven't had any problems" The she adds, "So far."

So far, so good. "When I stop to think, how many times my heart has beat in 100 years," marvels Ruth, with her hand at her chest. "That's something to think about." And there's still more to do. Ruth's outrageously active in Detroit's gay and lesbian community, she has email to answer with the help of a secretary and she's making a movie. Two women from Chicago are working on a documentary on Ellis that they're trying to complete in time for her 100th birthday which hopefully means another trip back home to Springfield where the house she grew up in still stands.

"They're trying to make a star out of me," Ruth laughs. "I've had my picture taken with the chief of police, the mayor and pretty soon, if I go to Washington, I guess it'll be the President. I ain't no star. I'm just an ordinary person."

Filmmaker, Yvonne Welbon has documented the life of Ruth Ellis in the making of "LIVING WITH PRIDE: RUTH ELLIS AT 100" Check out Ruth's website at
http://www.lib.usc.edu~retter/ruthmail.html

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Gay Seniors: fighting to get a grip on ageism

There are well over a million gay seniors nationwide, and they need our community to get a grip on ageism and help them with anti-gay bigotry. The rest of us can begin to help by understanding the formidable challenges our elders face. Gay seniors share many of the same problems as other old people: illness, loss of friends, reduced income , but in addition they often face terrible anti-gay bigotry. The legal system provides little protection from discrimination in housing and medical care. Spousal benefits are rare. If a partner is hospitalized, the spouse can be denied visitation or the right to make medical decisions. If a partner dies, the survivor can be kicked out of their home.

Ellen Ensig-Brodsky, the executive director of Pride Senior Network, said her work surveying nutritional practices in nursing homes and other facilities made her think about the special needs of older gays. „We need to make social and medical services safe and supportive for our elderly,‰ said Ensig-Brodsky. "Here people can be out and at ease with our social workers and we plan to train health-care providers on how to accommodate gay seniors needs." she added. For years Pride Senior Network and Senior Action in a Gay Environment have been working in tandem to provide services for gay seniors *Pride Senior Network* with medical referrals and Sage with social programs. In addition, Callen-Lorde offered health care services that older gays could access. But Ensig-Brodsky,s vision was to launch a "wellness and health center" that would provide a wide range of services for older gays. That turned out to be Pride Aging Resource Center (PARC). "We used to just give referrals," said Ensig-Brodsky. "Here people can come off the streets for direct services and referrals." PARC offers range of health care services including cancer screening, HIV prevention programs, and mental heath care treatment and referrals. PARC also plans to offer monthly educational workshops where seniors can learn how to better deal with issues around aging. "Gay and Lesbian elders suffer from ageism, so it,s important that they become incorporated into our culture." said Ensig-Brodsky. "That way they won,t think If I am not gorgeous and young, what do I do with my life?"

-- Ivan Castano

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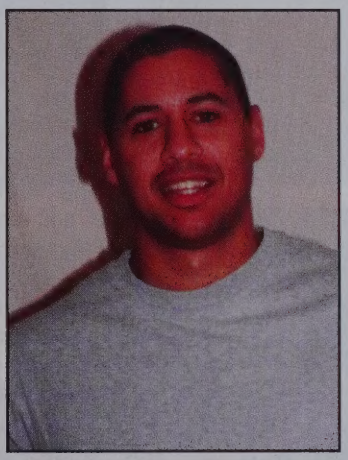
The 7 Most Eligible Bachelors: Young Gifted and Gay Portraits of seven black men in search of a mate

They are handsome, intelligent, and accomplished. They expect much out of life and ask a great deal of themselves. They are out and active in their local communities and their churches, giving of their time and their money. Some have traveled extensively, been published, formed businesses or led organizations. They are black men. They are gay. They are single. And with increasing frequency, more and more of them are looking for that special person with whom they can share their lives. All across the country, in living rooms and in clubs, on the telephone and in internet chat rooms, black gay men are talking openly about their needs and desires to form meaningful long-term relationships. In many of these discussions brothers have shared their frustration over the lack of diverse outlets that attract men of high character or range of interest. When you lead an active life and feel that you have a lot of love to give, it is only natural to want someone to enjoy the experience. Black gay men are no different. Single life has its pleasure, but many of us have grown tired of toiling all day at work, or in the community, only to return home each evening to an empty house. The growing scene of bar and club life gets old fast and that one night stands are not only unsafe but unsatisfying in the long run. Many men search for something more. Venus has invited the men featured here to share information about themselves, their interests, and the qualities they are looking for in a mate. They told us what they considered to be a romantic date and the necessary steps to build a successful relationship.

Ian C. Barrett, 35
Decatur, Georgia

A Human Resource Manager, Barrett is a doctoral student in Human Resource development. He enjoys reading, traveling and vacationing at the beach ("Especially those in Jamaica")." A night's stay in a first-rate hotel such as Atlanta's Ritz-Carlton, capped off by a carriage ride through downtown Atlanta and a Sunday brunch," is Barrett's idea of a romantic date. Between the carriage ride and brunch? "Sleeping the night away."

Barrett says the necessary steps in building a relationship are: "Introspection, feedback, honesty--the truth always comes to light-- flexibility, and the ability to say "I'm sorry." I want someone who is comfortable with his sexuality and gives back to his community. He should also be proactive and likes to have fun."



Jerry Miller
Oakland, California

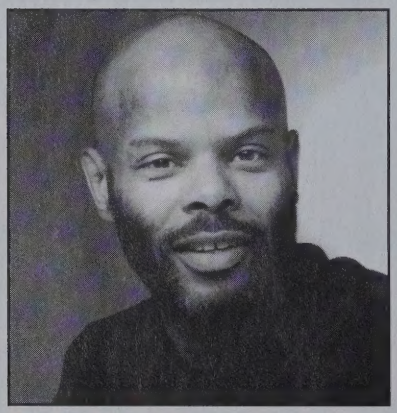
Playing the guitar, working out in the gym, and being a gadfly for change are Miller's hobbies. As for a romantic evening, it depends upon the person he's with. "Romance can happen in the back of a pickup with some Kentucky Fried Chicken," he offers. "Add some light rain and . . . well, it doesn't get any better," this Doctoral candidate in philosophy concluded.

The necessary steps for building a successful relationship are flexibility ("Not always getting what you want in a relationship when you want it.") and individuality. Miller wants someone who has a "quiet tenacity," the courage to have his own style, and the ability to take great pleasure in the simple things.

John Moses, 36
St. Rose, Louisiana

This college graduate and entrepreneur (Moses International Hair studios) enjoys listening to music, especially jazz and gospel and sometimes sings himself. A candlelight dinner with soft music in the background, whether at home or in a restaurant, is Moses, idea of a romantic date-- "quality time between just the two of us." To build a successful relationship you need to know each other. Join that with trust, honesty, respect, and the ability to communicate and you have the basis for a successful relationship. To these add Spirituality and the union is solid.

Moses wants a mate who is loyal, trustworthy, open-minded and down to earth. With all of these qualities, the person must also be secure and sensitive.

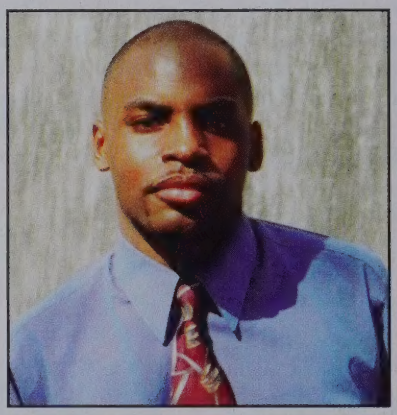


Robert E. Penn, 51
New York City

This author puts great store in exercise ("Stretching is the secret") As for romance, whether it's dining at a mutually selected restaurant, holding hands at a film, or cuddling in each other's arms while watching a video, a romantic date is dependent on the sensitivity of the persons dating.

To build a successful relationship, Penn believes one must stay in the present--"Don't compare him to someone you once dated, or to the love of your life who died of AIDS."

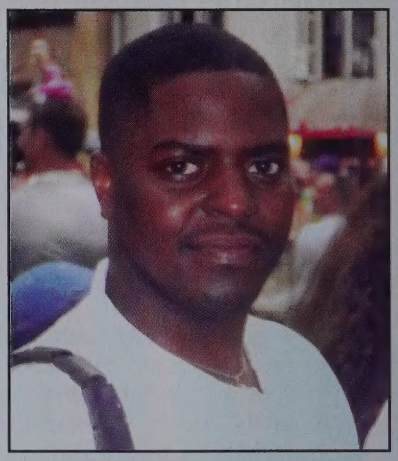
"The qualities that I seek in a mate are straightforward," Penn said. He must have "a personal relationship with the God of his understanding" and "doesn't play hide and seek when family visits."



Shannon Vinson, 26
Houston, Texas

A manager for Houston's "hometown airline" and a part-time bartender at one of the city's hotspots, Vinson likes traveling, eating haute cuisine, and writing. For that romantic evening, he favors conversation over a home-cooked meal while getting to know each other. "I am easy to please" he said, "and a great listener." Dating, trust, dependability, friendship and love are his steps to a successful relationship. Once in love, "you must work to keep the flame burning," he wrote.

My ideal? "He possesses a strong sense of self and prides himself on his family ties," Vinson said. Obviously, "he has already accepted his sexuality. If he's inclined to grab my hand at the mall, go for it."



Kirk Yancy Williams, 27
Lexington, Kentucky

A doctoral candidate in Biochemistry, Williams enjoys writing, cooking, computer programming, and music. On his most romantic date he imagines dinner at one of the French Quarter restaurants in his native New Orleans, after which they'd take a stroll down the moonwalk and listen to street musicians. A nightclub and dancing until the sun comes up is also in the mix.

De rigueur for any relationship is "friendship and communication."

A common interest can lead them to be near each other, and later to a loving relationship.

"I would like an intelligent, understanding man."

Kurt Henderson, 31
Dallas, Texas

This escrow assistant at a commercial title company is rooted in spirituality.

As such, he wants his mate to have, in his words, "an active relationship with the Lord and a strong desire to live a life pleasing to God." He would like this believer to be masculine "in character and appearance" and "willing to explore various levels of physical interaction in terms of recreation and sports." He feels communication and friendship with his mate are the keys to a successful relationship.

Henderson can forego a romantic date out for a quiet dinner in --candlelit with soft music, of course. After dinner? "Cuddling, touching, kissing, and conversation." Although the order seems reversed, we get the point--quality time with each other in a quiet setting.

RELATIONSHIPS

The Venus Online Survey reveals that:

42% of Venus Online readers are in committed relationships

27% are happy being single

24% are single, but would like to be in a relationship

5% are married to heterosexual partners

25% have been with their partner for less than one year

19% have been with their current partner from 1-3 years

14% have been together more than 3 but less than 10 years

5% have been together more than 10 years but less than 25 years

3% have been together for more than 25 years

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COUPLES OFFER ADVICE

"I think folk try to look for Mr. Perfect-- perfect body, perfect face--externals as opposed to the real person under the facade," said Reggie Harris, co-editor of Kummba: Poetry Journal for Black People in the Life. "I also think folk expect everything to e incredible, perfect, wonderful all the time." Harris and his partner, Mark Costes, have been in an 11-year committed relationship that has survived the inevitable ups and downs. Not surprising, Costes agreed: "I think people want to be partners, lovers, or mates before they become friends. You have to allow yourself time to get to know the other person and relate to them on a deeper level."

"Mark and I love each other, but we like each other too," Harris added. "I.d like to think that if we weren,t a couple we,d still be friends." John Keene of Jersey City, New Jersey, has been with his partner, Curtis Allen, for just as long. He cited several keys to establishing and maintaining a successful relationship. "Commitment, trust, flexibility, friendship, the ability to listen and communicate, forgiveness, a desire to grow and to allow the other person to do the same. Most important, relationships take work, time, and effort to succeed and evolve. Such longevity by these two couples may refute assertions that black gay men don,t have long relationships. Costes offers what may be the secret to their success: Above all else, never take your partner for granted."

--Bernard J. Tarver

"who said that?"

"Doing quality work -- that's what brings you self-respect and that's something folks seem mixed up about today. You hear all this talk about self-esteem or self-respect, as if it were something other people could give you. But what self-respect really means is knowing that you are a person of value rather than thinking 'I am special' in a self-congratulatory way."

-- Sarah ''Sadie'' Delany, who along with her sister, the late Dr. Bessie Delany, became best-selling authors of the book, ''Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters' First 100 Years''. Sarah Delany died in January at age 109

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Generic Name: nelfinavir (nel-FIN-na-veer) mesylate

For the Treatment of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Infection

Please read this information carefully before taking VIRACEPT. Also, please read this leaflet each time you renew the prescription, just in case anything has changed. This is a summary and not a replacement for a careful discussion with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss VIRACEPT when you start taking this medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when taking VIRACEPT and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

WHAT IS VIRACEPT AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

VIRACEPT is used in the treatment of people with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. Infection with HIV leads to the destruction of CD4 T cells, which are important to the immune system. After a large number of CD4 cells have been destroyed, the infected person develops acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

VIRACEPT works by blocking HIV protease (a protein-cutting enzyme), which is required for HIV to multiply. VIRACEPT has been shown to significantly reduce the amount of HIV in the blood. You should be aware, however, that the effect of VIRACEPT on HIV in the blood has not been correlated with long-term health benefits. Patients who took VIRACEPT also had significant increases in their CD4 cell count.

VIRACEPT is usually taken together with other antiretroviral drugs such as Retrovir® (zidovudine, AZT), Epivir® (lamivudine, 3TC), or Zerit® (stavudine, d4T). Taking VIRACEPT in combination with other antiretroviral drugs reduces the amount of HIV in the body (viral load) and raises CD4 counts.

VIRACEPT may be taken by adults, adolescents, and children 2 years of age or older. Studies in infants younger than 2 years of age are now taking place.

DOES VIRACEPT CURE HIV OR AIDS?

VIRACEPT is not a cure for HIV infection or AIDS. The long-term effects of VIRACEPT are not known at this time. People taking VIRACEPT may still develop opportunistic infections or other conditions associated with HIV infection. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC) infections, and Kaposi's sarcoma.

It is not known whether VIRACEPT will help you live longer or reduce the number of infections or other illnesses that may occur.

There is no proof that VIRACEPT can reduce the risk of transmitting HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

WHO SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT TAKE VIRACEPT?

Together with your doctor, you need to decide whether VIRACEPT is appropriate for you. In making your decision, the following should be considered:

Allergies: If you have had a serious allergic reaction to VIRACEPT, you must not take VIRACEPT. You should also inform your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist of any known allergies to substances such as other medicines, foods, preservatives, or dyes.

If you are pregnant: The effects of VIRACEPT on pregnant women or their unborn babies are not known. If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, you should tell your doctor before taking VIRACEPT.

If you are breast-feeding: You should discuss with your doctor the best way to feed your baby. You should be aware that if your baby does not already have HIV, there is a chance that it can be transmitted through breast-feeding. **Women should not breast-feed if they have HIV.**

Children: VIRACEPT is available for the treatment of children 2 through 13 years of age with HIV. There is a powder form of VIRACEPT that can be mixed with milk, baby formula, or foods like pudding. Instructions on how to take VIRACEPT powder can be found in a later section that discusses how VIRACEPT Oral Powder should be prepared.

If you have liver disease: VIRACEPT has not been studied in people with liver disease. If you have liver disease, you should tell your doctor before taking VIRACEPT.

Other medical problems: Certain medical problems may affect the use of VIRACEPT. Some people taking protease inhibitors have developed new or more serious diabetes or high blood sugar. Some people with hemophilia have had increased bleeding. It is not known whether the protease inhibitors caused these problems. Be sure to tell your doctor if you have hemophilia types A and B, diabetes mellitus, or an increase in thirst and/or frequent urination.

CAN VIRACEPT BE TAKEN WITH OTHER MEDICATIONS?

VIRACEPT may interact with other drugs, including those you take without a prescription. You must discuss with your doctor any drugs that you are taking or are planning to take before you take VIRACEPT.

Drugs you should not take with VIRACEPT:
- Seldane® (terfenadine, for allergies)
- Hismanal® (astemizole, for allergies)
- Propulsid® (cisapride, for heartburn)
- Cordarone® (amiodarone, for irregular heartbeat)
- Quinidine (for irregular heartbeat), also known as Quinaglute®, Cardioquin®, Quinidex®, and others
- Ergot derivatives (Cafergot® and others, for migraine headache)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Versed® (midazolam)

  Taking the above drugs with VIRACEPT may cause serious and/or life-threatening adverse events.
- Rifampin (for tuberculosis), also known as Rimactane®, Rifadin®, Rifater®, or Rifamate®

  This drug reduces blood levels of VIRACEPT.

Dose reduction required if you take VIRACEPT with:
Mycobutin® (rifabutin, for MAC); you will need to take a lower dose of Mycobutin.

A change of therapy should be considered if you are taking VIRACEPT with:
- Phenobarbital
- Phenytoin (Dilantin® and others)
- Carbamazepine (Tegretol® and others)

  These agents may reduce the amount of VIRACEPT in your blood and make it less effective.
- Oral contraceptives ("the pill")

  If you are taking the pill to prevent pregnancy, you should use a different type of contraception since VIRACEPT may reduce the effectiveness of oral contraceptives.

HOW SHOULD VIRACEPT BE TAKEN WITH OTHER ANTI-HIV DRUGS?

Taking VIRACEPT together with other anti-HIV drugs increases their ability to fight the virus. It also reduces the opportunity for resistant viruses to grow. Based on your history of taking other anti-HIV medicine, your doctor will direct you on how to take VIRACEPT and other anti-HIV medicines. These drugs should be taken in a certain order or at specific times. This will depend on how many times a day each medicine should be taken. It will also depend on whether it should be taken with or without food.

Nucleoside analogues: No drug interaction problems were seen when VIRACEPT was given with:
- Retrovir (zidovudine, AZT)
- Epivir (lamivudine, 3TC)
- Zerit (stavudine, d4T)
- Videx® (didanosine, ddl)

If you are taking both Videx (ddl) and VIRACEPT: Videx should be taken without food, on an empty stomach. Therefore, you should take VIRACEPT with food one hour after or more than two hours before you take Videx.

Nonnucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NNRTIs):
When VIRACEPT is taken together with:
- Viramune® (nevirapine)

  The amount of VIRACEPT in your blood may be reduced. Studies are now taking place to learn about the safety of combining VIRACEPT with Viramune.
- Other NNRTIs

  VIRACEPT has not been studied with other NNRTIs.

Other protease inhibitors:
When VIRACEPT is taken together with:
- Crixivan® (indinavir)

  The amount of both drugs in your blood may be increased. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.
- Norvir™ (ritonavir)

  The amount of VIRACEPT in your blood may be increased. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.
- Invirase® (saquinavir)

  The amount of saquinavir in your blood may be increased. If used in combination with saquinavir hard gelatin capsules at 600 mg three times daily, no dose adjustments are needed. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF VIRACEPT?

Like all medicines, VIRACEPT can cause side effects. Most of the side effects experienced with VIRACEPT have been mild to moderate. Diarrhea is the most common side effect in people taking VIRACEPT, and most adult patients had at least mild diarrhea at some point during treatment. In clinical studies, about 20% of patients receiving VIRACEPT 750 mg (three tablets) three times daily had four or more loose stools a day. In most cases, diarrhea can be controlled using antidiarrheal medicines, such as Imodium® A-D (loperamide) and others, which are available without a prescription.

Other side effects that occurred in 2% or more of patients receiving VIRACEPT include abdominal pain, asthenia, nausea, flatulence, and rash.

There were other side effects noted in clinical studies that occurred in less than 2% of patients receiving VIRACEPT. However, these side effects may have been due to other drugs that patients were taking or to the illness itself. Except for diarrhea, there were not many differences in side effects in patients who took VIRACEPT along with other drugs compared with those who took only the other drugs. For a complete list of side effects, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

HOW SHOULD I TAKE VIRACEPT?

VIRACEPT is available only with your doctor's prescription. The light blue VIRACEPT Tablets should be taken three times a day. VIRACEPT should always be taken with a meal or a light snack. You do **not** have to take VIRACEPT exactly every 8 hours. Instead, you can take it at normal times when you are eating.

Take VIRACEPT exactly as directed by your doctor. Do not increase or decrease any dose or the number of doses per day. Also, take this medicine for the exact period of time that your doctor has instructed. **Do not stop taking VIRACEPT without first consulting with your doctor, even if you are feeling better.**

Only take medicine that has been prescribed specifically for you. Do not give VIRACEPT to others or take medicine prescribed for someone else.

The dosing of VIRACEPT may be different for you than for other patients. **Follow the directions from your doctor, exactly as written on the label.** The amount of VIRACEPT in the blood should remain somewhat consistent over time. Missing doses will cause the concentration of VIRACEPT to decrease; therefore, **you should not miss any doses.** However, if you miss a dose, you should take the dose as soon as possible and then take your next scheduled dose and future doses as originally scheduled.

Dosing in adults (including children 14 years of age and older)

The recommended adult dose of VIRACEPT is 750 mg (three tablets) taken three times a day. Each dose should be taken with a meal or light snack.

Dosing in children 2 through 13 years of age

The VIRACEPT dose in children depends on their weight. The recommended dose is 20 to 30 mg/kg (or 9 to 14 mg/pound) per dose, taken three times daily with a meal or light snack. This can be administered either in tablet form or, in children unable to take tablets, as VIRACEPT Oral Powder.

Dose instructions will be provided by the child's doctor. The dose will be given three times daily using the measuring scoop provided, a measuring teaspoon, or one or more tablets depending on the weight and age of the child. The amount of oral powder or tablets to be given to a child is described in the chart below.

Pediatric Dose to Be Administered Three Times Daily

Body Weight Kg	Lb	Number of Level Scoops*	Number of Level Teaspoons†	Number of Tablets
7 to < 8.5	15.5 to <18.5	4	1	-
8.5 to <10.5	18.5 to <23	5	1¼	-
10.5 to <12	23 to <26.5	6	1½	-
12 to <14	26.5 to <31	7	1¾	-
14 to <16	31 to <35	8	2	-
16 to <18	35 to <39.5	9	2¼	-
18 to <23	39.5 to <50.5	10	2½	2
≥23	≥50.5	15	3¾	3

In measuring oral powder, the scoop or teaspoon should be level.

* 1 level scoop contains 50 mg of VIRACEPT. Use only the scoop provided with your VIRACEPT bottle.

† 1 level teaspoon contains 200 mg of VIRACEPT. Note: **A measuring teaspoon used for dispensing medication** should be used for measuring VIRACEPT Oral Powder. Ask your pharmacist to make sure you have a medication dispensing teaspoon.

How should VIRACEPT Oral Powder be prepared?

The oral powder may be mixed with a small amount of water, milk, formula, soy formula, soy milk, dietary supplements, or dairy foods such as pudding or ice cream. Once mixed, the entire amount must be taken to obtain the full dose.

Do **not** mix the powder with any acidic food or juice, such as orange or grapefruit juice, apple juice, or apple sauce, because this may create a bitter taste.

Once the powder is mixed, it may be stored at room temperature or refrigerated for up to 6 hours. Do **not** heat the mixed dose once it has been prepared.

Do **not** add water to bottles of oral powder.

VIRACEPT powder is supplied with a scoop for measuring. For help in determining the exact dose of powder for your child, please ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

VIRACEPT Oral Powder contains aspartame, a low-calorie sweetener, and therefore should not be taken by children with phenylketonuria (PKU).

HOW SHOULD VIRACEPT BE STORED?

Keep VIRACEPT and all other medicines out of the reach of children. Keep bottle closed and store at room temperature (between 59°F and 86°F) away from sources of moisture such as a sink or other damp place. Heat and moisture may reduce the effectiveness of VIRACEPT.

Do not keep medicine that is out of date or that you no longer need. Be sure that if you throw any medicine away, it is out of the reach of children.

Discuss all questions about your health with your doctor. If you have questions about VIRACEPT or any other medication you are taking, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist. You can also call 1.888.VIRACEPT (1.888.847.2237) toll free.

The following are registered trademarks of their respective manufacturers: Retrovir, Epivir/Glaxo Wellcome Oncology/HIV; Zerit, Videx/Bristol-Myers Squibb Oncology; Invirase, Versed/Roche Laboratories Inc; Seldane, Rifadin, Rifamate, Rifater/Hoechst Marion Roussel; Hismanal, Propulsid/Janssen Pharmaceutica Inc; Halcion, Mycobutin/Pharmacia & Upjohn Co; Rimactane, Tegretol/CibaGeneva Pharmaceuticals; Viramune/Roxane Laboratories, Inc; Dilantin/Parke-Davis; Crixivan/Merck & Co, Inc; Imodium A-D/McNeil Consumer Products Co; Cordarone/Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories; Quinaglute/Berlex Laboratories; Cardioquin/The Purdue Frederick Co; Quinidex/A.H. Robins Co, Inc; Cafergot/Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corp. Norvir is a trademark of Abbott Laboratories.

Issued 11/13/97

CALL 1.888.VIRACEPT

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BRAVO DANI

This Harlem native stepped out with her first full-length cd, Dani One N One I on Bizman Entertainment. Although this is her first solo project, Dani has been hooked up with music for years as a back-up singer.

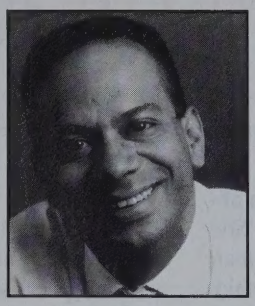
With her mother is an opera singer and her father a jazz musician, Dani was influenced by music early in life. She sang in church at the age of five. As an adolescent, she studied dance and theater at the Dancer Theatre of Harlem. Her dreams were sidetracked, however, because of drugs, violence, and emotional abuse. Her faith in God and a will to survive helped her to break free. Then, her mother died and Dani took the responsibility of raising three younger siblings. Now, Dani is presenting her life's experience to the world through her music. She speaks her mind through her lyrics. The melodic timbre of her voice entices the ear, while enriching the heart. Her lyrics make you reflect on your own life, while discovering what life has been for her.

Dani says: "While many singers and rap artist are speaking of dreams of glitter and gold and a glamorous life: I have lived that and lost that for the love of a crack pipe."

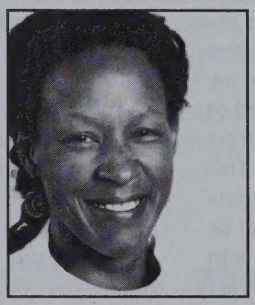
NO FATS, NO FEMS

Michael Lynch's solo cabaret at New York's La MaMa theater was an insightful journey into the simple yet complex reality and illusion of a "Broadway Trainee" [also the the title of the opening number where Michael gloriously shows up in drag to audition for the perfect Broadway part. His in-your-face facts about "A Month of Violence" depicts his deep sense of civic duty as he recites a list of hate crimes that occurred in NYC that were never spoken about in the media. Another number, "Tamika" (True Colors), is about the denial that teenagers face when they indulge in unprotected sex and find themselves not only pregnant, but infected with the HIV/AIDS virus. Michael's choices for the show were interesting, (some questionable), but on a whole, his presentation and concepts were informative and very well received. Keep a look out for "No Fats, No Fems" and support and indulge!

congrats

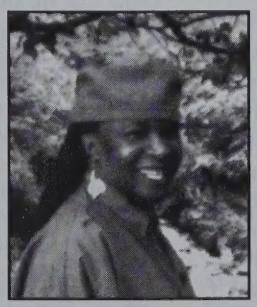


MARIO COOPER, ESQ. is the recipient of the AIDS Policy Center for Children, Youth & Families, 1999 Public Service Award. The award was formally presented by Dr. Alvin Pouissant. The AIDS Policy Center Public Service Award is given annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to improving the lives of people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS. As founder of Leading for Life/ Harvard AIDS Institute, Mario helped prompt the nation,s religious, business and political leaders to do more to fight AIDS in communities of color.

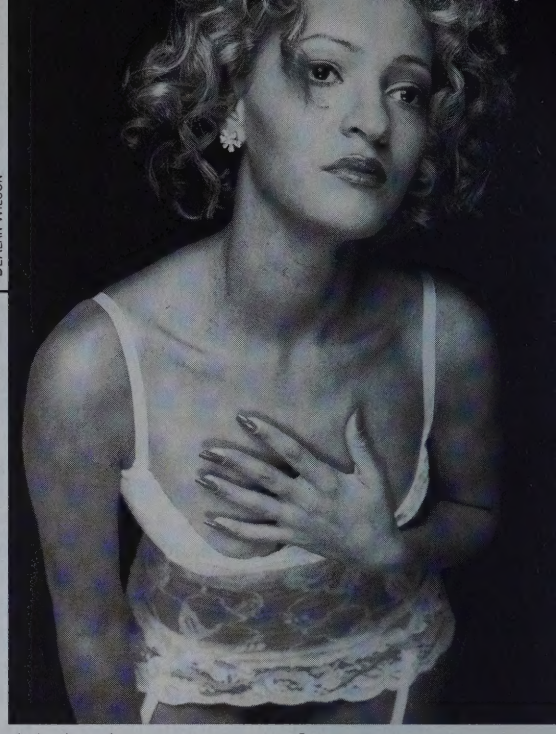


LECIA BROOKS received honors from the L. A. Gay & Lesbian Center for her outstanding contributions to the well-being of the community. She received the Grassroots Activist L. A. C. E. (Lesbians and bisexual women Active in Community Empowerment) Award. An effective and powerful advocate for youth, Brooks works with the National Conference for Community and Justice to address homophobia and heterosexism among other "isms," in training programs for adults and youth.

VANESSA ROMAIN was also honored by the L. A. Gay & Lesbian Center when she received the L. A. C. E. Award of Spirituality. Romaine has won several hard-fought battles in her life, some of the most noteworthy within the Catholic Church. Always serving her church as an out lesbian, Romain has challenged the Archdiocese to successfully implement programs for youth, the homeless, and those affected or infected by HIV/AIDS. For her efforts, she was personally thanked by Los Angeles Cardinal Roger Mahoney at a special mass celebrating 120 years of ministry with lesbian and gay Catholics in Long Beach.



DR. AYIA M. ADAMS, metaphysician, poet, actress, and playwright, won both the Pat Parker Memorial Poetry Prize ($250) and the Audre Lorde Memorial Prose Prize ($500). The winning essay, "We Cannot Live A Lie," and poem, "Mama Cried," were published in the Spirit of Women in The Moon (number 8) last Spring. Dr. Adams is the founder of Holistically Alive, a nonprofit metaphysical organization for the motivational and inspirational tapes and healing services.



DeAlan Wilson

Sex Talk

Q: My lover and I broke up after four years of living together. She started sleeping with another woman soon after we ended our relationship. This woman is very controlling and demanding. My ex has tried to break it off several times, but the other woman keeps coming back in an assertive way. My ex called me and told me she is still in love with me. But each time we attempt to mend our relationship, the other woman always interferes and my ex gets the feeling she is obligated to this woman because she doesn't feel right about leaving her so soon. This is the other woman's first gay experience. Should I tell my ex there will be no more returning here and go on with my life? My ex is not at all happy, yet she doesn't know how to break if off without repercussions from this woman.

Vexed by my Ex

A: Unless there is information of which you are not privy, the obligation your "ex" states she has is unnecessary, if the woman is a consenting adult. She does, however, owe [the other woman] the honesty of her "true" feelings. It is also apparent that your "ex" is feeling some intimidation from this other woman. This makes it more imperative that your "ex" be clear, strong, and forthright. Advise your "ex" that if she truly wants to be with you instead of this other person, she must tell her caringly, but very firmly, that she no longer wants to have further interaction with her of any kind.

It is necessary, also, to advise this other woman that should she be unwilling to respect your "ex's" wishes, the assistance of authorities and legal system will be utilized. If your "ex" is unable or unwilling to advise and take these measures, it is time for you to move on. Otherwise, you will be involved in a situation with predictable escalation of complications. It is your "ex's" responsibility to return to you clear of other relationships, not as a victim in need of rescue.

Geanie Bond is a licensed marriage and family therapist in Atlanta, Georgia. Contact her at 404-256-6709

Ask Marian

Q: Dear Marian:

I think my ex's mother is trying to come on to me. Me and my ex parted on good terms, and though we are great friends, we've both moved on. I've always kept in touch with her mother. She invited me to stay over night at her place when I flew into town last month on business. I was shocked when she asked me what women do in bed, a subject we have never approached. At first I thought it was my imagination, but she kept gently brushing against me in the kitchen and made a point to say how much I remind her of her late husband. She is a very attractive woman and I'll admit that I found her advances titilating, but something just doesn't feel right. She has invited me to come again soon. Should I run this by my ex? What if I decide give Mother what she wants? If my ex ever suspects anything, our great friendship could change.

Signed,
On Ice

A:

Dear On Ice:

Your issue is not about the morality of your ex-lover's mother's coming on to you, or your willingness to respond. It's about your own boundaries and trusting yourself to respect them. In this situation, you don't feel right because you know that making a move will find you outside of those boundaries. You are correct about the dynamics of your relationship changing if your ex ever suspected anything. In fact, should you decide to 'give Mother what she wants' and even if your ex never found out, your relationships with both women would change. Find someplace else to lodge on your next business trip. Go for the choices that make you feel good and that you can sleep with!

You've Got Q:s?

We've Got A:s!

QandA @venusmagazine.com

The Shape of Things to Come:

Firming Your Breast

Sagging breasts do not have to be a foregone conclusion as we get older. Some women arrive at middle age and realize that gravity has sent their breasts south for the winter, and the other seasons, too. Regaining those perky breasts of our younger years may be possible through exercise. Here is a plan for lifting that silhouette by toning the muscles that support it. (Please consult your personal physician before beginning any exercise plan.) A breast-firming program has to be realistic about the structure and possibilities of the bosom. The breasts are fatty tissue and mammary glands surrounded by pectoral (chest) muscles. You cannot change the size of your breasts by working out. However, you can change the size of the muscle around the breast, and thereby make the breasts look bigger. Strengthening the muscles gives the breasts that "perkier" appearance. This toning of the chest muscles essentially creates a natural Wonder Bra. So lets get started.

The breast-firming exercise plan should include three basic exercises: the modified push-up; the dumbbell press; and the pec deck machine. While the push-up can be done without special equipment, the other two exercises require the use of machines usually found in a gym or health club.

PHOTO CREDIT: CLYDE NIXON STUDIOS
MAKE UP BY CINDY ROBINSON

Modified Push-Up

This exercise strengthens the upper body overall. Any upper body exercise plan must include the push up. Place your hands on the floor, shoulder-width apart , with your elbows perpendicular to your body. Cross your ankles and lift your feet until you are on your hands and knees. Lower your upper body as far as you can, trying to touch the floor with your chest while keeping your back straight and your head up at the lowest point of the movement. I recommend 3 sets of 8 to start.

Dumbbell Bench Press

This exercise contours and builds mass. I recommend the dumbbell press over the barbell press because it is safer for beginners. Bring your arms and the dumbbells up and squeeze your chest muscles at the top of the movement. When you lower your arms back to horizontal, make sure to bring them into full parallel with the floor. Lower the weight slowly and, again, squeeze the chest muscles at the finish. You must feel this exercise in your chest for it to be effective, so don't focus on how much you're lifting, but rather on how you are lifting.

I recommend 3 set of 10 reps to start

Pec Deck Machine

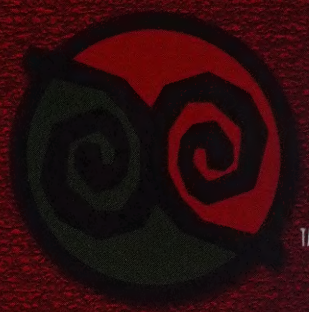
This is a tricky exercise to do effectively. You must squeeze the chest muscles as hard as you can when coming up. You will know the exercise is working when the chest rises slightly when you squeeze. Keep your head and shoulder on the pad to avoid neck strain. Make sure your arms are parallel to the floor and on the pads. While doing the movement, go way up and all the way back. This rep movement allows the beginner to focus on squeezing the muscles. After some practice you can do a full rep.

I recommend 3 set of 10 reps to start.

These three basic movements are the foundation of a great shaping and toning program for your bust line. So happy lifting! V

Lovonia Mallory, a certified personal trainer, author, and bodybuilder, owns Female Fitness in Albany, New York. She is Fitness Editor of Venus.

Empowerment
Black On Black Love
Self-Love
Community & Personal Affirmation
Celebrating Our Way Of Loving
In Dialogue
In Communion



TM *The SGL symbol

BWX

Black Womyn's Xchange

Black Same-Gender-Loving (SGL) Sistahs,
Loving Themselves In Their Own Image

BWX gathers weekly, 7:00 p.m. at the AMASSI Health, Wellness and
Cultural Affirmation Center in Los Angeles
For More Information Call 310.419.1969
Ask for Habiba

Lawrence Brown
(1893-1972)

Lawrence Brown accompanied the great singer, actor, scholar Paul Robeson for so long (1925-1972), we often forget that Brown, an accomplished musician in his own right, had embarked on a successful career before meeting Robeson. Maud Cuney Hare in her seminal book, *Negro Musicians and Their Music*, called Brown a "Torch bearer." David Schwalbe wrote in an article found on the internet's about.com, that it was Brown "who helped Robeson to realize that it was the spirituals and other African American music in their repertoire" that needed to be brought to the people of the world.

Born in Florida before the turn of the century, Brown had been propagating African American music since his musical studies in New York City. In his concerts he exposed audiences around the nation to the music of black composers. He arranged African American melodies for violin and piano, and for cello and piano. Brown studied in London for four years where he appeared before the king and queen, and princess Victoria. He vowed never to return to a racist America. However, when he did, he worked diligently to preserve the "peculiarity" of African American music -- both in melody and rhythm. He also trained young musicians to carry on his tradition. J. Robert Bradley, national chorister of the National Baptist Convention, USA for 60 years was such a person.

Bradley studies with Brown. "He took me on at a dollar and a quarter a lesson--all I could afford and less than he usually charged-- and helped to build my repertoire: German, French, Italian and folk music," Bradley said. "I stayed with Brown for two years."

Brown is one of the pioneers responsible for preserving the music of our past. His goal was to recognize the beauty created by our ancestors. In doing so, he put forth the best of his talent, not his sexuality.

"MR. BROWN NOT ONLY PLAYED FINE ACCOMPANIMENTS BUT LENT VARIETY AND A FURTHER RACIAL COLOR IN THE PROGRAM BY JOINING IN THE MELODY WITH THE SINGER."

--MUSICAL AMERICAN, 1931, AFTER A PAUL ROBESON CONCERT.

POOL PARTY

Who cares if you swim or not, these suits are designed to get you in hot water

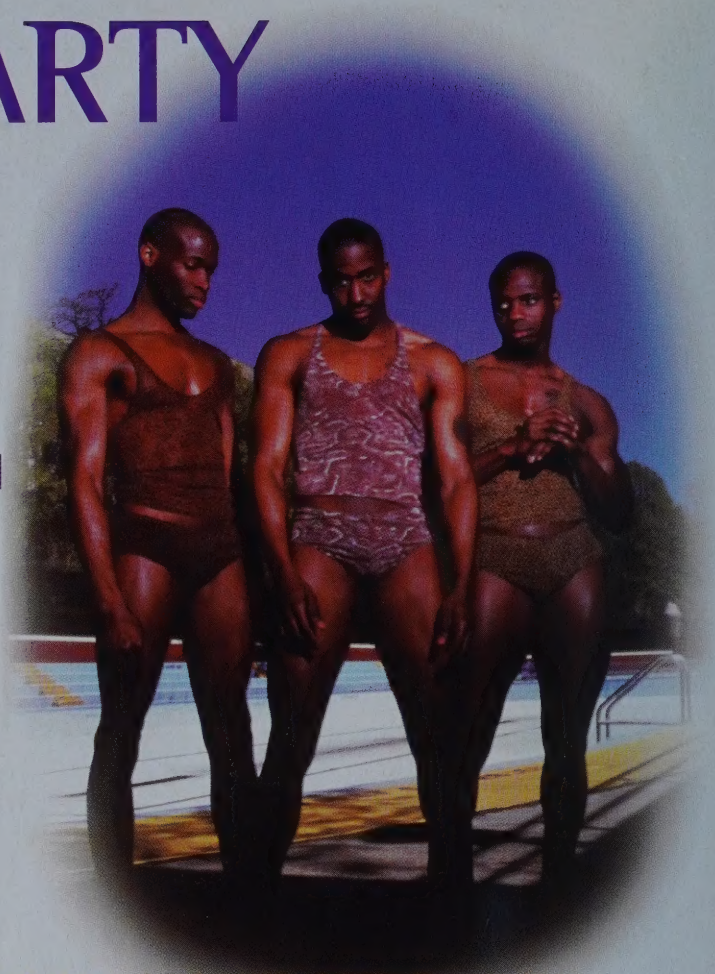
Photographer-Hosea Johnson
Editor-Ernest Montgomery
Models-Derrin, Gbenga, & Walid

Special Thanks to the staff at the Jackie Robinson Park

Tom of Finland
261 W. 19th St. 212-229-1375

James Livingston 212-304-8983

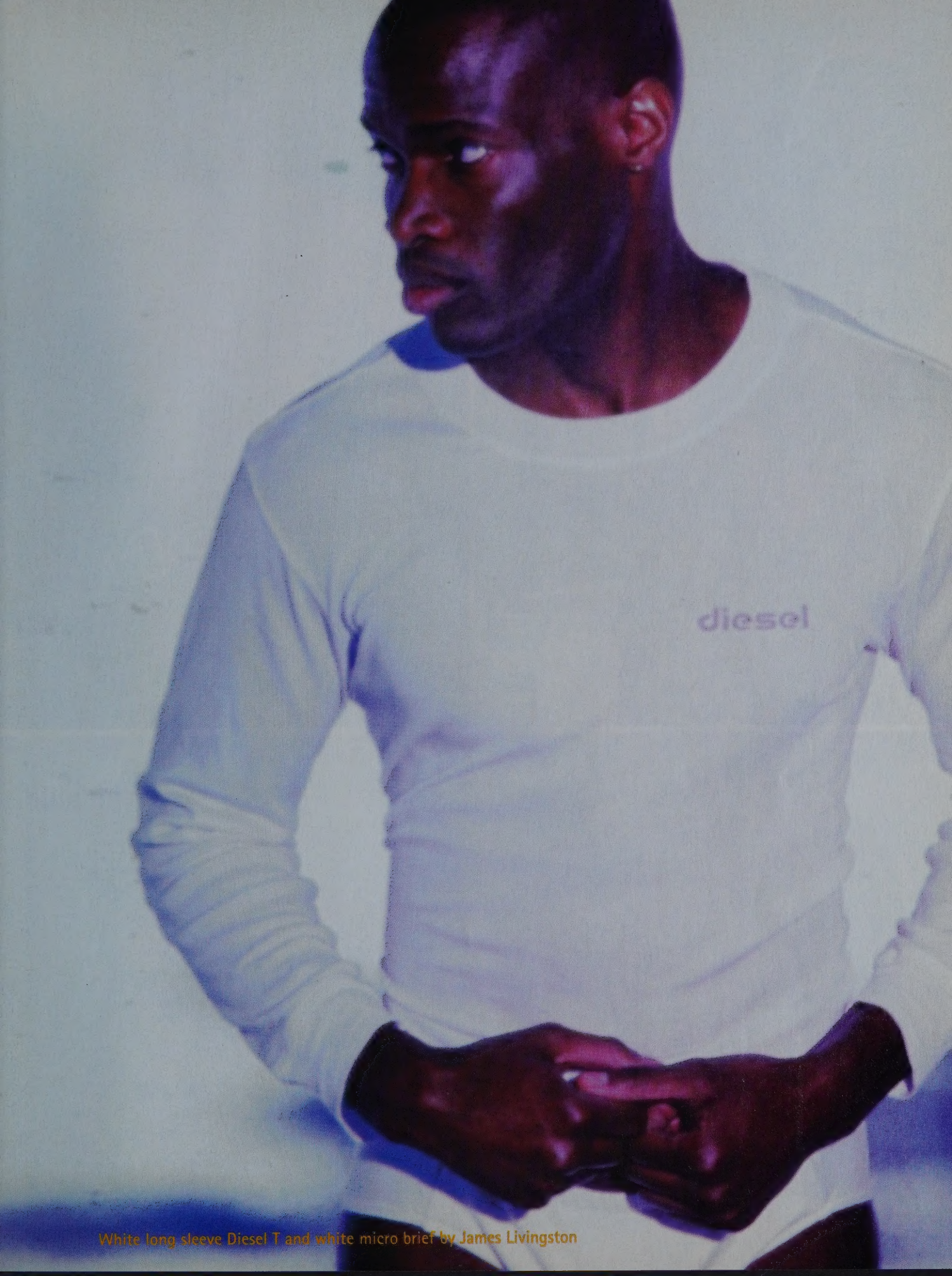
Alexander Bruce available at Hyperreality 212-620-8180



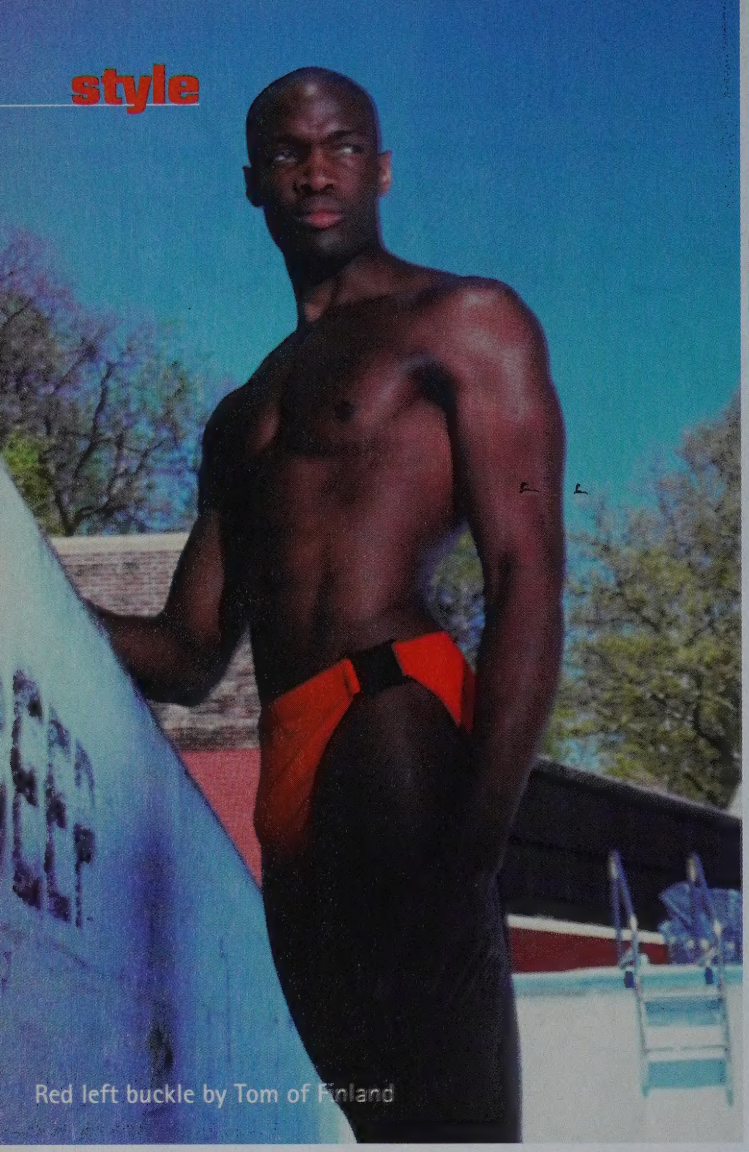
Animal prints tank and matching brief by Alexander Bruce

If you're lying on the white sands of Ibiza, dipping your toes in the surf at South Beach, or tipping on concrete at the municipal swimming pool, it's important to look good. Nobody will talk about how well you swim. Everyone will whisper about how you looks. So, this Summer you might as well be grand as you go down to the sea in Skivvies. Look at this assortment of swimsuits and imagine you in one of them, the center of attention.

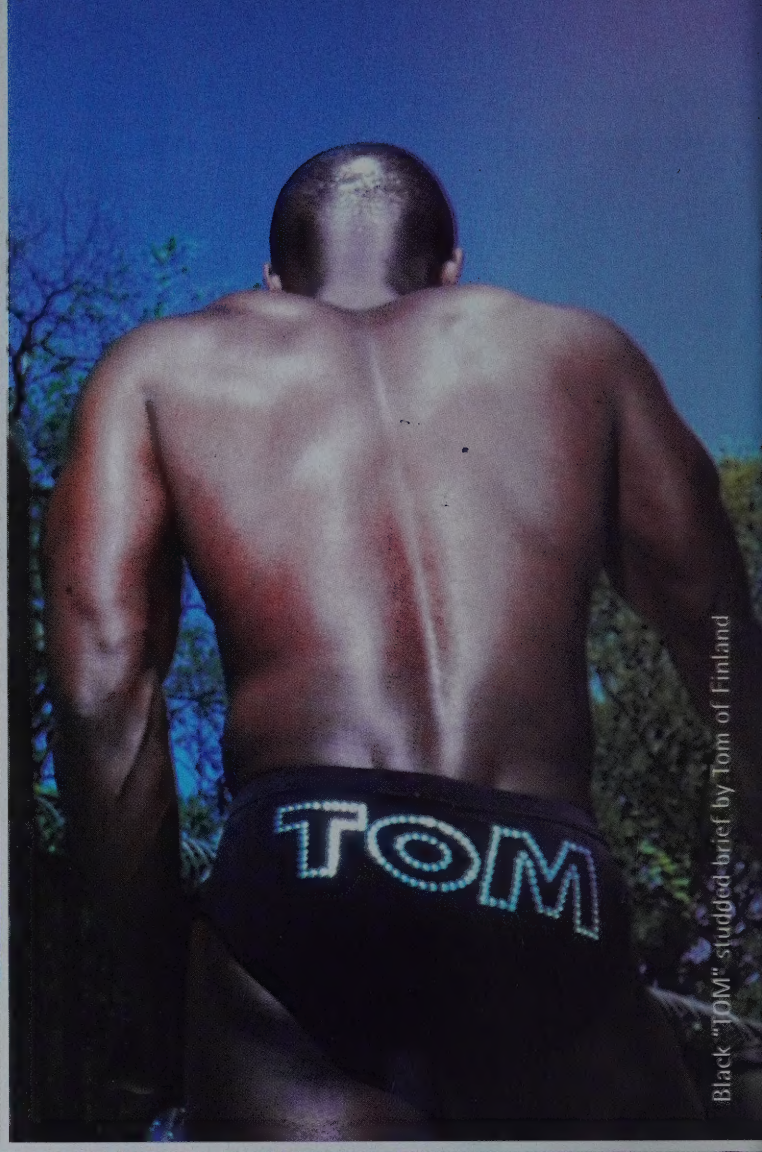
The three designers featured here are Alexander Bruce, Tom of Finland, and James Livingston. They have covered all the bases--although barely--and given us square cut briefs, bikinis, and thongs, to make this a sizzling summer. They have used see-through animal prints with matching tank-top; patriotic red, white, and blue; and fire engine red with easy access side buckle and all are fitted. Many of these swimsuits leave nothing for the imagination and show off the body you worked so hard on all winter--or should have. In any case, look at these suits and go for it.



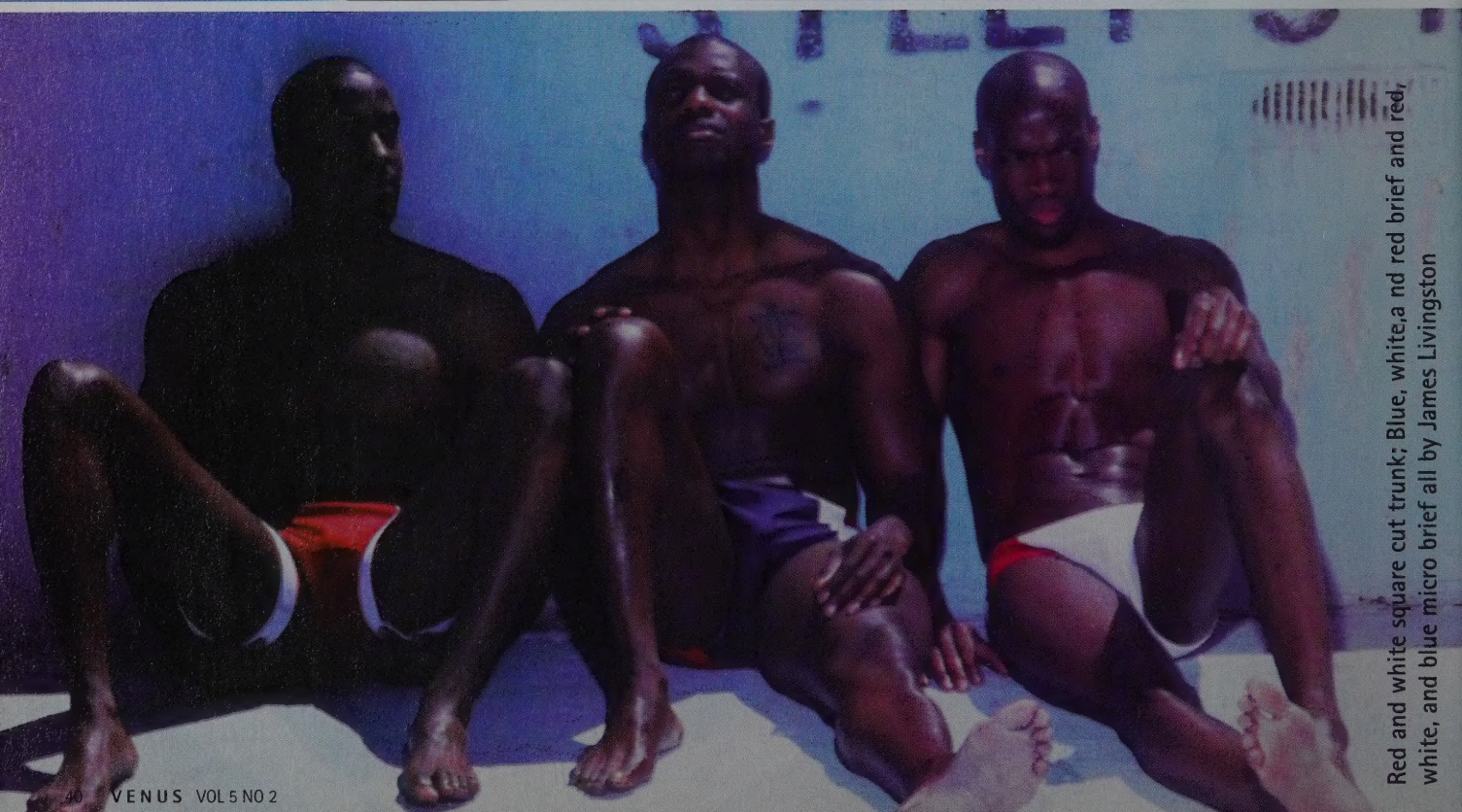
White long sleeve Diesel T and white micro brief by James Livingston



Red left buckle by Tom of Finland



Black "TOM" studded brief by Tom of Finland

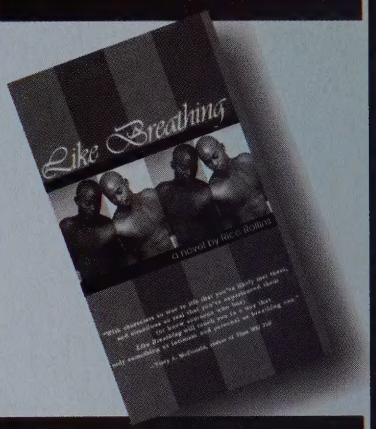


Red and white square cut trunk; Blue, white,a nd red brief and red, white, and blue micro brief all by James Livingston

White Finn Flag trunk by Tom Finland

Navy blue and white square cut trunk by James Livingston and
tery cloth fisherman hat by Old Navy

For us . . .



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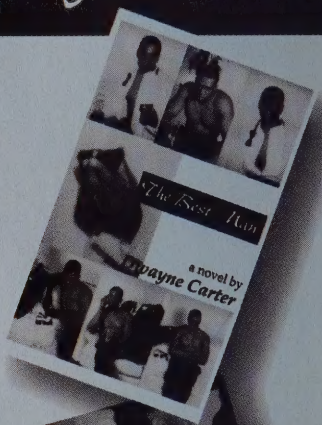

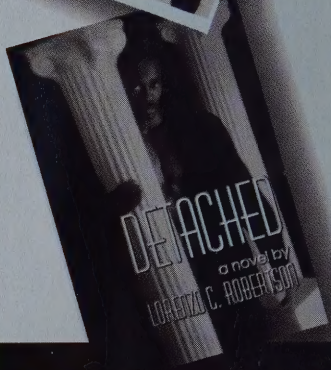

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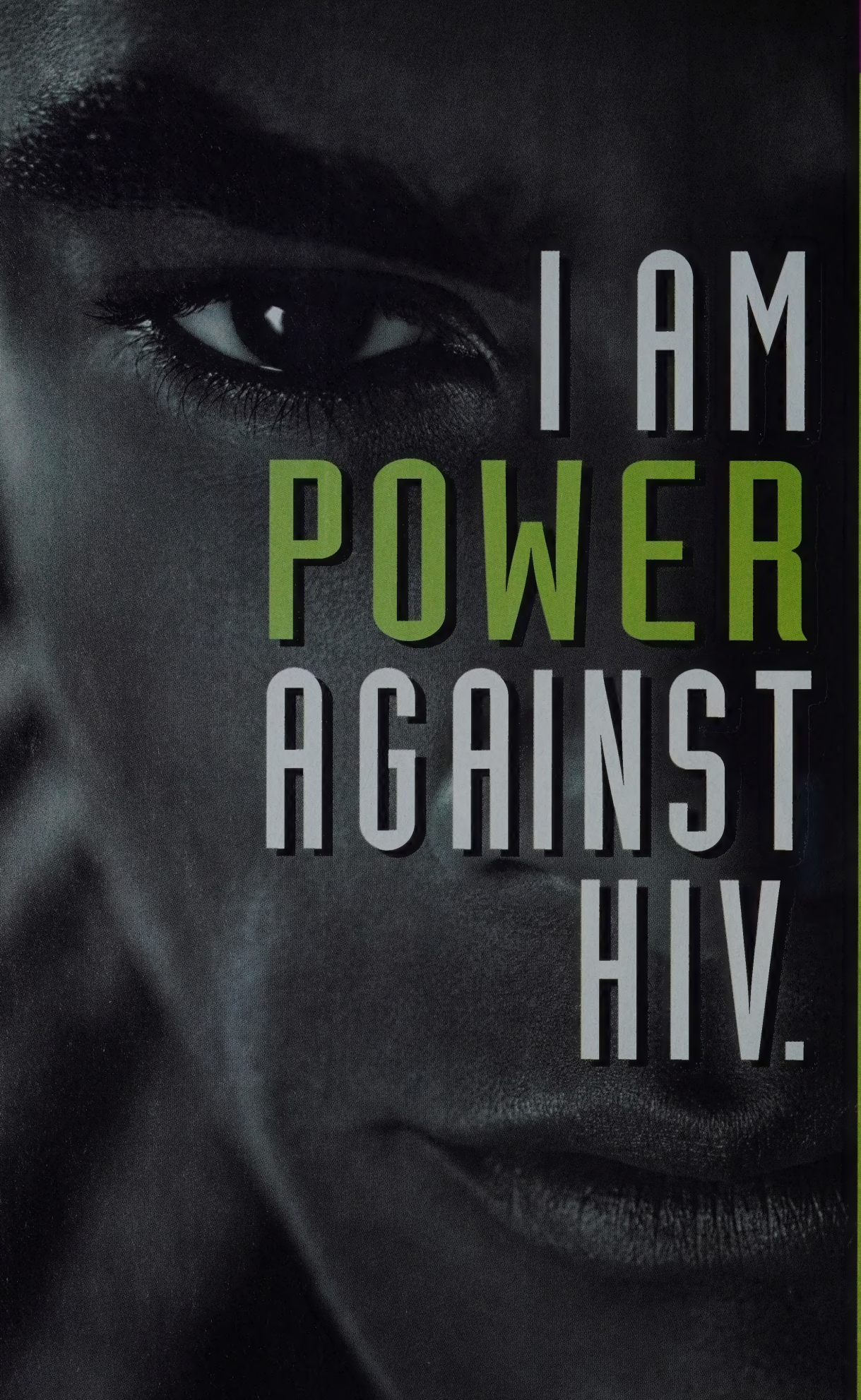
Donna Summer

The Donna Summer story began on New Year's Eve, when Donna Adrian Gaines was born in the Dorchester section of Boston. Growing up in a family of five sisters and one brother, she created a unique identity by exploring an early interest in music. A young follower of gospel legend Mahalia Jackson, Donna first tested her voice at the age of eight, performing with church choirs. "It was then that I know I had been given a very special gift from God," she recalls. "It was just a matter of how to best use it."

At the age of 18, Summer moved to New York in search of a career in entertainment. An audition to replace Melba Moore in the Broadway hit "Hair" led to a prime spot in the show's road company, which eventually landed the young singer in a German production of this classic musical theater work. Around this time, Donna married actor Helmut Sommor, a union which ended in divorce. She kept the name, however, anglicizing its spelling. In 1975, Summer along with producers Giorgio Moroder and Pete Bellotte created the epic song "Love to Love You Baby" and the credibility of a new musical genre and the career of its key figure took flight.

The success of "Love to Love You Baby" triggered a series of Donna Summer albums that would brilliantly blend the primal groove urgency of disco, and funk with symphonic strings and soaring dramatic vocals. Hard core club DJs as well as pop radio programmers indulged in her compelling hits like "Hot Stuff", "Last Dance" and the Academy Award-winning theme of the film "Thank God It's Friday."

"Of all the songs from those days, I probably still feel most connected to Last Dance, " says the singer. "Sing it and it brings tears to my eyes. for me, it's become a poignant song. There were a lot of people in my life who are not with us anymore. It's like I'm singing to the memory of people who are special to me."


I AM
POWER
AGAINST
HIV.

Talk to your healthcare professional about ZIAGEN. Or call 1-888-TALK-2-GW (1-888-825-5249).

I am

Ziagen™

abacavir sulfate 300 mg tablets

I drive down viral load

Most people who took ZIAGEN with two other nucleoside analogues as their first combination regimen achieved undetectable viral load through 16 weeks.* ZIAGEN does not cure HIV infection/AIDS or prevent passing HIV to others. It's not known whether taking ZIAGEN will slow the progress of HIV disease or help you live longer.

I am two pills a day, with or without food

The easy dosing of ZIAGEN—just one tablet in the morning and one at night, with or without food—simplifies your combination therapy.

I give you treatment options

ZIAGEN is powerful enough to achieve undetectable viral load when used in initial combination therapy*—for example, ZIAGEN + COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg) Tablets—and may preserve future treatment options. ZIAGEN can be effective in patients who have used anti-HIV drugs before, but the effects are less.

Important safety information

About 5% of patients (5 in 100) who take ZIAGEN have a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) that may result in death. IF YOU HAVE SKIN RASH OR TWO OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING SETS OF SYMPTOMS, STOP TAKING ZIAGEN AND CALL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY: fever, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain, severe tiredness, achiness, or generally ill feeling. A written list of these symptoms is on the Warning Card and Medication Guide provided by your pharmacist. You should carry the Warning Card with you.

If you must stop treatment with ZIAGEN because you have had this serious reaction, NEVER TAKE ZIAGEN AGAIN. If you take ZIAGEN again after you have had this serious reaction, WITHIN HOURS you may experience LIFE-THREATENING symptoms that may include LOWERING OF YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE OR DEATH.

A buildup of lactic acid and an enlarged liver, including fatal cases, have been reported rarely with HIV drugs of this type.

Most side effects were mild to moderate; the most common side effects were nausea, vomiting, malaise or fatigue, headache, diarrhea, and loss of appetite. Most of these side effects did not cause people to stop taking ZIAGEN.

*71% (62/87) of patients taking ZIAGEN with lamivudine + zidovudine in this clinical trial had viral load undetectable below 400 copies/mL using the Roche Amplicor HIV-1 MONITOR® Test.

Please see important information for ZIAGEN and COMBIVIR on adjacent pages.

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www.ZIAGEN.com

Glaxo Wellcome HIV
A division of Glaxo Wellcome Inc.
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
Web site: www.glaxowellcome.com

MEDICATION GUIDE

ZIAGEN™ (z-EYE-uh-jen) (abacavir sulfate) Tablets and Oral Solution

Established name: abacavir (uh-BACK-ah-veer) sulfate tablets and oral solution

In order to take Ziagen safely, you should read all of the information in this Medication Guide each time you fill your prescription for Ziagen.

What is the most important information I should know about Ziagen?

About 5% of patients (5 in 100) who take Ziagen have a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) **that may result in death.** If you have **skin rash** or two or more of the following sets of symptoms, you may be having this kind of reaction:

- **fever**
- **nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain**
- **severe tiredness, achiness, or generally ill feeling**

A written list of these symptoms is on the Warning Card provided by your pharmacist. You should carry this Warning Card with you. **IF YOU NOTICE THESE SYMPTOMS WHILE TAKING ZIAGEN, STOP TAKING ZIAGEN AND CALL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY.**

If you must stop treatment with Ziagen because you have had this serious reaction, **NEVER TAKE ZIAGEN AGAIN**. If you take Ziagen again after you have had this serious reaction, **WITHIN HOURS** you may experience **LIFE-THREATENING** symptoms that may include **LOWERING OF YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE OR DEATH**.

Ziagen can have other serious side effects. Be sure to read "What are the possible side effects of Ziagen?" in the section to the right.

What is Ziagen?

Ziagen is a medication used to treat HIV infection. Ziagen is taken by mouth as a tablet or a strawberry-banana flavored liquid. It belongs to a class of anti-HIV medicines called nucleoside analogue reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs). Ziagen is only proven to work when taken in combination with other anti-HIV medications. When used in combination with these other medications, Ziagen helps lower the amount of HIV found in your blood and keep your immune system as healthy as possible so that it can help fight infection. However, Ziagen does not have these effects in all patients.

Ziagen does not cure HIV infection or AIDS. At this time, there is no evidence that Ziagen will help you live longer or have fewer of the medical problems that are associated with HIV infection or AIDS. Because of this, you must be sure to be seen regularly by your health care provider.

Who should not take Ziagen?

Do not take Ziagen if you have ever had a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) to Ziagen. In such cases, you should return all of your unused Ziagen to your doctor or pharmacist for proper disposal.

How should I take Ziagen?

Take Ziagen exactly as your doctor prescribes it.

The usual dosage for adults (at least 16 years of age) is one 300-mg tablet twice a day.

Adolescents and children from 3 months to 16 years of age can also take Ziagen™ (abacavir sulfate) Tablets and Oral Solution. Your doctor will tell you if the oral solution or tablet is best for your child.

Also, your child's doctor will decide the right dose based on your child's weight and age. Ziagen has not been studied in children under 3 months of age.

Ziagen can be taken with food or on an empty stomach.

To help make sure that your anti-HIV therapy is as effective as it can be, be very careful to take all of your medication exactly as your doctor prescribed it and do not skip any doses.

If you miss a dose of Ziagen, take the missed dose immediately. Then, take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time.

When your supply of Ziagen and other anti-HIV drugs starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. It is very important that you take anti-HIV drugs as prescribed by your doctor because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if one or more of the drugs is stopped, even for a short time.

What should I avoid while taking Ziagen?

Ziagen has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination. Continue to practice safe sex while using Ziagen. Do not use or share dirty needles.

Talk to your doctor if you are pregnant or if you become pregnant while taking Ziagen. Ziagen has not been studied in pregnant women and the risk to the unborn child is not known.

Mothers with HIV should not breastfeed their infants because HIV in the breast milk can be passed to the infant.

What are the possible or reasonably likely side effects of Ziagen?

Some people have had a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) to Ziagen, which can be fatal. Instructions on how to recognize a possible reaction, as well as what to do if such a reaction is suspected, are discussed in the section "What is the most important information I should know about Ziagen?"

The class of medicines to which Ziagen belongs (NRTIs) can cause a condition called lactic acidosis, together with an enlarged liver. In some cases, this condition can be fatal. Women are more likely than men to experience this rare but serious side effect.

Ziagen can cause other side effects. In studies, the most common side effects with Ziagen were nausea, vomiting, malaise or fatigue, headache, diarrhea, and loss of appetite. Most of these side effects did not cause people to stop taking Ziagen. This listing of side effects is not complete. Your doctor or pharmacist can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects with Ziagen. Talk to your doctor promptly about any side effects you have.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Medication Guide. Ask a health care professional about any concerns about Ziagen. Professional labeling is available to your doctor and other health care professionals. If you want more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist to let you read the professional labeling.

GlaxoWellcome

Glaxo Wellcome Inc.
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

December 1998 MG - 001

This Medication Guide has been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration.

Patient Information about COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg) Tablets

for HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) Infection
Generic name: lamivudine/zidovudine tablets

Please read this information before you start taking COMBIVIR (pronounced KOM-bī-veer). Staying informed will help you to work more closely with your doctor and healthcare team to determine what is best for you. Remember, this information does not take the place of careful discussion with your healthcare provider. You should remain under a doctor's care when using COMBIVIR and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your healthcare provider.

What is COMBIVIR?

COMBIVIR is the brand name of a tablet that combines EPIVIR® Tablets (lamivudine tablets) [3TC®] and RETROVIR® (zidovudine) Tablets [AZT], two drugs which are used to treat HIV (human immunodeficiency virus). HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome).

How does COMBIVIR work?

COMBIVIR is a combination of lamivudine (la-MIV-u-deen) and zidovudine (zī-DOHV-u-deen), two medicines (nucleoside analogues) that slow down the replication of the HIV virus. This can reduce the virus' ability to infect new cells. It may help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 (T) cell count. Lamivudine plus zidovudine when used together can have stronger (synergistic) effects against the virus. COMBIVIR is a convenient way of taking lamivudine and zidovudine. COMBIVIR should usually be taken with other anti-HIV therapy.

Will COMBIVIR work the same as EPIVIR and RETROVIR taken together?

Yes, taking one COMBIVIR Tablet twice a day is the same as taking one EPIVIR 150 mg Tablet twice a day and either two RETROVIR 100 mg Capsules three times a day or one RETROVIR 300 mg Tablet twice a day.

How should I take COMBIVIR?

Take COMBIVIR as your doctor prescribes it. The recommended dose is one COMBIVIR Tablet orally two times a day, with or without food. To help make sure you will benefit from COMBIVIR, you must not skip doses or take "drug holidays."

What should I do if I miss a dose of COMBIVIR?

If you miss a dose by more than 4 hours, wait and then take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time. However, if you miss a dose by less than 4 hours, take your missed dose immediately. Then take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. Do not take more or less than your prescribed dose of COMBIVIR at any one time.

Does COMBIVIR cure HIV infection or AIDS?

No, there is not a cure for HIV infection or AIDS. People taking COMBIVIR may still develop infections or other illnesses associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important to remain under the care of a healthcare provider. Use of lamivudine plus zidovudine has been shown to help patients with HIV infection stay healthy and live longer.

Does COMBIVIR reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

No, COMBIVIR, as well as other HIV medications, has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

Who should not take COMBIVIR?

You should not take COMBIVIR if you have had a serious allergic reaction to either lamivudine or zidovudine.

Do not take COMBIVIR at the same time as EPIVIR or RETROVIR because they also contain lamivudine and zidovudine.

Individual dosing with EPIVIR plus RETROVIR, rather than COMBIVIR, should be considered for:

- A child under 12 years of age.
- A patient who weighs less than 110 pounds.
- Anyone who requires dosage adjustments due to drug side effects or poor kidney function.

What medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my healthcare provider?

Talk to your healthcare provider if:

- You are pregnant or if you become pregnant while taking COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg) Tablets. Ask your doctor about enrolling you in the Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry: 1-800-258-4263.
- You are breastfeeding. Mothers infected with HIV should not breastfeed their infants because HIV is present in breast milk.

Also talk to your doctor about:

- Problems with your blood counts.
- Problems with your muscles.
- Problems with your kidneys.
- Problems with your liver, especially if you have mild or moderate liver disease, such as hepatitis.

Can COMBIVIR be taken with other medications?

Yes, COMBIVIR can be taken with most medications, including most anti-HIV drugs. Be sure to tell your healthcare provider about all medications, over-the-counter or prescription, that you are taking.

What are the possible side effects of COMBIVIR?

Do not rely on this summary alone for information about side effects. Your healthcare provider can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects that may be relevant to you.

The safety of COMBIVIR is not expected to be different from the safety of EPIVIR and RETROVIR given separately.

In clinical studies of lamivudine plus zidovudine, side effects occurring in 5% or more of patients included: muscle and joint pain, headache, nausea, weakness and fatigue, nasal symptoms, cough, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting, neuropathy, trouble sleeping, fever or chills, loss of appetite, dizziness, abdominal pain or cramps, depression, skin rashes, and indigestion.

It's important to know that serious side effects can occur with COMBIVIR, such as a decrease in red and white blood cells and muscle damage. A buildup of lactic acid and an enlarged liver, including fatal cases, have been reported rarely with some HIV drugs, including nucleoside analogues.

For HIV-infected individuals, periodic blood tests are recommended. If certain changes occur in your laboratory results while you are taking COMBIVIR, particularly if you become anemic or if your white blood cell count falls too low, your medication may need to be adjusted; your doctor may prescribe EPIVIR plus RETROVIR separately in place of COMBIVIR.

Tell your doctor promptly about any side effects or other unusual symptoms you may experience.

Other Information

This medication is prescribed for a particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep COMBIVIR and all medicines out of the reach of children.

Like most prescription drugs, lamivudine and zidovudine were required to be tested on animals before they were allowed for human use. In animal studies with doses much higher than those used in humans, zidovudine was associated with vaginal tumors. Your healthcare provider can tell you more about how drugs are tested on animals and what the results of these tests may mean about safety for you.

How should I store COMBIVIR Tablets?

COMBIVIR Tablets may be stored at room temperature and do not require refrigeration.

This provides a summary of information about COMBIVIR. If you have any questions or concerns about COMBIVIR or HIV, talk to your healthcare provider.

Glaxo Wellcome
HIV
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Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
Web site: www.glaxowellcome.com

What Goes Around Comes Around
A Look at Astrology

By Joy Isoke

What affect do the stars and planets have on our lives? This is an age-old question asked from generation to generation. In trying to answer that question, we have developed tools that magnify the sky. Star patterns, planet cycles and rhythms are documented. Astronomers astrologers observe and study different aspects of life and how they might relate to the heavens.

"Do the stars and planets affect our life on Earth?" The answer is, yes. After thousands of years of observation, documentation, mathematics-especially geometry, the science of astrology emerged.

Astrology is the art of interpreting the cyclic movement of the planets and their effects on life. It is both scientific and artistic. The planets rotate and travel in exact precision, which we call time and space. Because they travel at a specific rate of speed, we have a cosmic clock. If you were to stop this cosmic clock at a specific time, on a specific day, in a specific place you would have a map of the planets frozen in time. We call this map a horoscope. A horoscope can represent a person, place, or event. Each planet within the horoscope represents a specific part of life; expresses itself through a sign--Aries, Virgo or Sagittarius (i.e. Sun sign In Aries, for example); forms relationships with other planets called Aspects; and is located in areas of your life called Houses. Houses are described numerically from one to twelve. The second house is finance; fourth house is home; seventh house is relationships. With this information an astrologer can interpret the relationship between the planets and their effect on a person,s life. Astrology can be used as a tool to reveal your

personal potential, enhance self-awareness and determine compatibility within relationships Events can also be examined for outcome clarification.

Astrology is a helpful tool in gaining knowledge regarding your life and can be used to determine future occurrences and possibilities. The sun, moon and planets maintain such precision that an astrologer can predict what may come to pass. For example, as long as the clock keeps ticking you will know at 12:00 noon that in five hours it will be 5:00 p.m. and you will leave your job. An astrologer can predict your departure at 5:00 based upon the accuracy of the clock. You may also elect not to leave at 5:00 p.m. because you have „free will,‰ the power of choice. Which is a gift from our creator. In this respect, you may change the inevitable. If it is predicted that you will have financial difficulties for the next three months, you can choose to be frugal instead of going on a shopping spree. By making this choice you are utilizing the astrological guidance in a pro-active way and altering the course of possibilities. Astrology is an exact science of interpretation, which utilizes astronomical calculations. It also involves, in my opinion, intuitive abilities and common sense. The universe is an infinite educational system and we have finite knowledge. It is for this reason we need to keep an open mind. What goes around, comes around, comes around precisely as the cosmic clock continues its rhythmic ticking in the place beyond the sky. V

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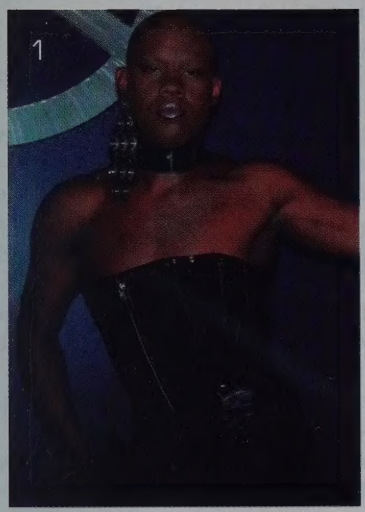
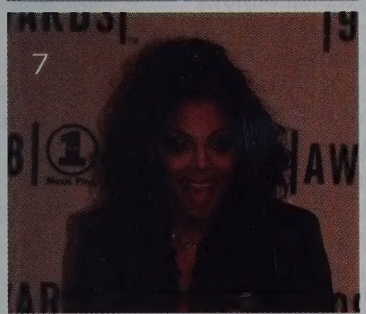




STARS COME OUT AT NIGHT

1. Kevin Aviance at Limelight re-opening party **2.** Sean "Puffy" Combs and Anne Heche at VH1 Fashion Awards **3.** Lena Horne appearing at J&R Music World Jazz Outlet **4.** Mohammad Ali & Wife at GQ "Men of the Year" Awards **5.** Chaka Kahn performing at Bartender's Ball **6.** Nia Long at VH1 Fashion Awards **7.** Janet Jackson at VH1 Fashion Awards

So you still haven't gotten a hold of Dani yet...

Well, are you conscience?

If you enjoy music that is seductive to the mind, then you are sure to fall in love with the sultry voice of Dani. Dani brings you a compilation of funk, R&B/jazz, with a touch of lifespel. Make no mistake; her voice will make love to your eardrums while soothing your soul.

You will hear the heart and soul of a woman who has experienced life firsthand. Dani has chosen this, her first solo project, on an independent label, to be dedicated to her mom.

Look for Dani at Black Pride Chicago in July giving out things and lighting up the stage with her presence!

Stay up on Dani's latest merchandise and promotional items by writing for an order form. Please hold August 27th for Dani's upcoming album release party and benefit.

Be sure to check out the website where you can sample songs off the CD and you may also purchase it, all for the low price of $12.99, which includes shipping and handling.

For bookings and more info on Dani:

WWW.Bizman2000.com

Bizman Entertainment
P.O. Box 20445
Newark, NJ 07101
(212) 591-2330

BIZMAN ENTERTAINMENT

THE BLACK

Black Lesbian & Gay Pride Events

Atlanta, GA, In The Life Atlanta.....Sept.2-6

Chicago, IL, BlackPride.....July 1-5

Cleveland, OH, BlackOut.....July 28

Dallas,TX, Black Gay Pride .....October

Detroit, MI, Hotter Than July.....July 28

Houston, Splash Weekend .....May 2

Houston Black Pride .....June 24-27

Los Angeles, At The Beach.....July 1-5

Memphis Gay Pride Weekend .....June 20

Minneapolis/St Paul Black Pride ..... August 26

New York City/Black Pride .....July 30- Aug.2

Philadelphia, PA, Black Gay Pride ..April 24-26

Oakland, CA Black Pride.....June 19

Raleigh/Durham, NC, Unity Fest Œ99....Sept. 24-26

San Francisco, CA, Black Pride.....October 8

Washington DC, Black Gay Pride....May 27-31

Black Gay Pride New York City.....August 5-8

Check our site at www.venusmagazine.com for contact information

The Venus Online survey has revealed that during 1999:

42% of those answering were definitely attending Black Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in Washington, D.C.

33% were definitely going to In The Life Atlanta

24% were headed to At The Beach in Los Angeles

16% Chicago Black Pride

13% Houston Splash with

10% New York City Black Pride with

Check it out at www.venusmagazine.com

Black Pride New York City

Aug. 5-8, For info 212-613-0097

If We can Make It Here, We'll make it Anywhere!

This year's planning committee promises an awakening of new ideas, philosophies, fashion, and entertainment. The event is only in it,s second year and has already become a favorite on the travel circuit. The focus is on Inclusion as evidenced by the planned Empowerment Workshops for elders, youth, and the transgendered communities.

Best: The Summer Storm Ball; awards, trophies, fashion

Don't Miss: The Reese Beach Party; The Main Event at Aaron Davis Hall featuring various recording artists.

In the Life Atlanta

Sept. 2-6, Labor Day Weekend
404-872-6410,
www.mindspring.com/_tynell/itla.htm

Return to Royalty: Reclaiming Our Heritage

Atlanta is a Hot destination on Black Pride Circuit. This years host committee promises the event will be "bigger and better as ITLA seeks to pull together the entire community." Return to Royalty is a call to "remember our ancestors and reclaim that which we have either lost or given up through many years of oppression or disenfranchisement."

Best: Speak Fire Poetry Slam founded by the late Tony Daniels and The Cultural Arts Festival and Health and Wellness Emposium

Don't Miss: Fashion Show and Kick-Off Party, Ms. Gay Pride International and Black Gay Day at Six Flags

Unity Fest 1999

North Carolina Black Pride
September 24-26, Durham, NC
Unity Fest '99 P.O.Box 46663
Raleigh, NC 26720
E-mail: OutNBlack@aol.com

This will be the second festival of its kind in N.C. The weekend includes events focused on social, political, educational and health related issues, as

PRIDE CIRCUIT

well as a wide variety of entertainment. Several workshops and discussion groups will be presented by local and national African-Americans. Best:TBA Don't Miss:TBA

Plan Ahead for Next Year!

Black Lesbian and Gay Pride Day

May 27-31, Memorial Day WeekendWashington D.C.
www.blackpride.com
The "Grand Daddy" of Black Pride celebrations! DC Black Pride starts off the travel circuit in the Spring of each year. Nearly 15,000 brothas and sistahs make their annual pilgrimage to the Nation,s capitol to network, meet new friends and to enjoy a variety of well-planned events.
Best: Ira Palmer,s BBQ and Pool Party
Don't Miss: The Associates Annual Spring Affair; Sunday Afternoon at Baneker Field-Live entertainment, markets, food, and plenty of Fine folx passing through!

Splash Weekend

May 2, Houston, Texas
713-942-CLUB for info
Black Pride Texas Style!
Real unity among BLGT communities is evidenced by high visibility and inclusion of the African-American Trans community during this weekend event. Several Pageants are presented with heavy turnouts and hefty cash prizes. Best: Take it Off Friday-Male dancer strip down with $300 cash prize! Don,t Miss: The Clikque Pool Party, after all it is Splash Weekend!

At The Beach

July 1-5, Los Angeles, CA
For info 213-293-4282
Head for Hollywood!
One of the most popular destinations on the circuit is Malibu Beach on the 4th of July. Oceans of chiseled abs, pecs, and thighs will keep your head turning all weekend. A two mile stretch of gorgeous beach is reserved just for us.

Best: The Body Contest [Worth the plane fare alone!] Don't Miss: The Annual Fashion Show hosted by International Male Catalog

Chicago Black Pride

July 1-5, Chicago, IL
For info 773-288-2078,
www.geocities.com/WestHollywood /cafe/2381/ "Independence '99-*Coming2GetherAs1*
This is the Windy City's first year organizing an Official, Black Pride event, although the Kids traditionally turn out in huge numbers at The Rocks, during the City's [white] Pride celebration each June. Produced by several DC Pride transplants and Chicago power players, the first event is sure to be a grand success!
Best: TBA, Don,t Miss: TBA

For Sistahs Only!

Sistah Summerfest - June 11 Virginia, www.erols.com/sistah, SistahFest Oct.1-4 Malibu, CA 213-960-5051 MoonSisters Drum Camp Oct 2-4 Sausalito, CA 510-547-8386

For Brothas Only!

Brother-2-Brother Men's Retreat, Oct 1-3 Malibu, CA "Living in the Spirit"-Registration $175.00 call 323-964-7820 Adodi Annual Men,s Retreat, July 30 - August 1, Litchfield, CT "Intimacy: Discovering & Working Its Full Potential" Registration $250.00, Call 312-458-9584
Check out our National Events Calendar@ www.venusmagazine.com for updates! Email us at calendar@venusmagazine.com to correct add or delete national events.

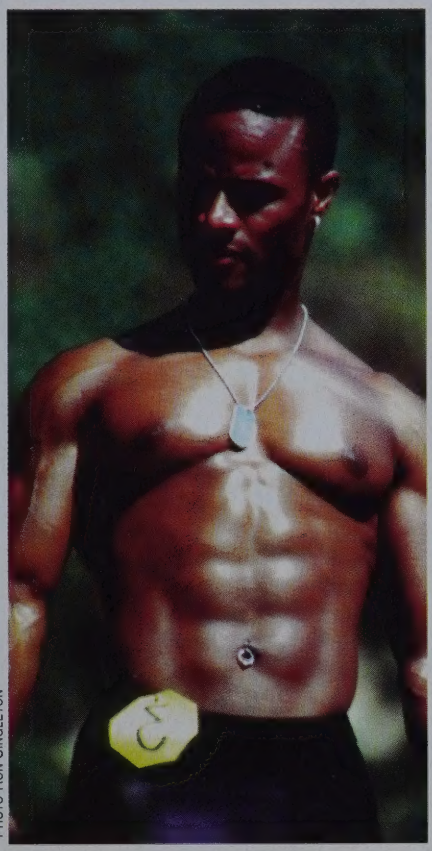


PHOTO RON SINGLETON

HOW OUT, IS OUT?

The Venus Online survey has revealed that:

92% of VenusOnline readers are out to all their friends

75% are out to co-workers

74% are out to parents and sibling

58% are out to college Fraternities and Sororities

56% are out to neighbors

47% are out to health care professionals

33% are out at church or out to traditional pastor

20% are out to children and grandchildren

Check it out at
www.venusmagazine.com

Whitney Houston

When you're as big a star as Whitney Houston, people move quickly to support your causes. That's perhaps why The Whitney Houston Foundation For Children, Inc. has been so successfully. The non-profit organization assists with a variety of children's issues, such as homelessness, cancer, AIDS and the self-empowerment of today's youth. The Foundation has also raised funds for the needs of children around the world, including a sold-out concert tour in South Africa. The Foundation's HBO televised special from Constitution Hall for the The Children's Defense Fund raised over $300,000 and The Foundation throws an annual Christmas party for homeless children of Newark, NJ.

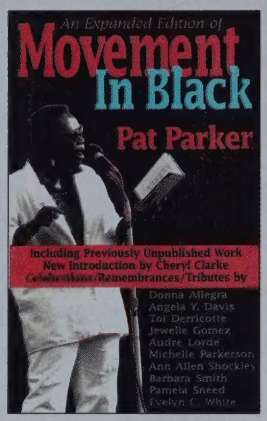
Houston's most recent gift to children was her appearance on VH1 Diva,s Live. The show was so exhilarating that Houston's performance alone has inspired us all to reclaim the music--to pick up those old piano, guitar, and violin lessons we dropped years ago, to musically encourage our children and to BE encouraged by Whitney's voice. Her performance was so powerful that it has all but guaranteed her a sold-out 1999 concert tour as fans clamor to find tickets, some traveling as far as 1,000 miles to experience Houston's magic in their venue of choice. Too much? No way. After all, she is a diva.

Kimberly Purnell

CHICAGO BLACK LESBIANS AND GAYS-UNITY CONFERENCE
1. Co-Chairs Robert Schultz & Sherri Jackson **2.** Detroit Youth Contingency **3.** l-r Steve Wakefield, Kimberly Purnell, Gregory Victoriane **4.** Sisters enjoying the Unity banquet enteraniment **5.** Curtis Lipscomb of Kick Magazine and his life partner Mark Stevens/ **6.** Elias Farajaje-Jones, Rev. Carol Jonhson, and Activist and author Barbara Smith **7.** Lorraine Baskerville & Susan Stanely **8.** Adrienne Fishe and her band appearing at the Bitter End in NYC **9.** Chicago Unity dancer **10.** Co-Chairs Susan Stanley and Robert Schultz

Movement in Black

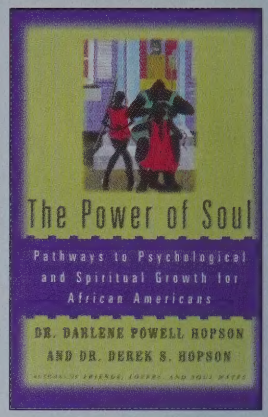
Pat Parker
Firebrand Books, 1999



This is a revision of Parker's 1978 Firebrand classic. The book is both celebratory and commemorative. Parker died of breast cancer in 1989. In addition to the writings in the first publication, this volume has a section of previously unpublished pieces. In this tribute are works by Donna Allegra, Angela Davis, and Audre Lourde, among others. This volume gives an opportunity for both those who were around the first time and those who are new to her work to experience and enjoy this activist's work.

The Power of Soul

Pathways to Psychological and spiritual Growth for African Americans
Dr. Darlene Powell Hopson and Dr. Derek S. Hopson
William Morrow, 1999

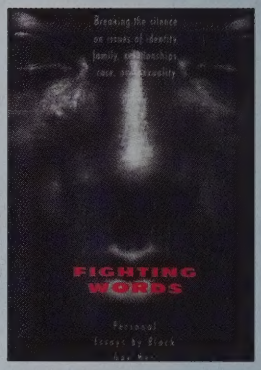


This husband and wife team argue that African Americans have a unique soul--a deep sense of connectedness, strength, and a focus born of a history of overcoming obstacles with courage and dignity. Through anecdotes and wise discussion, the Hopsons show how spiritual connection strengthens self-awareness, intimate relationships, family ties and personal goals. This is a book about meanings and happiness, healing and harnessing the life force of soul.

Fighting Words

Personal Essays By Gay Black Men
Edited by Charles Michael Smith
Avon Books, 1999
ISBN 0-380-79947-2

In vital and forthright prose, thirty American writers explore the joys, outrages, contradictions and rewards of their lives as gay black men. Broken into five parts each section focused on a theme of importance to the black gay male community. Fighting Words explores issues of identity, relationships, the AIDS crisis, racism and homophobia, and the legacy of the gay pride movement. Bruce Morrow, coeditor of "Shade: An Anthology of Fiction by Gay Men of African Descent", pens "Confronting Adversity" in which the writer finds strength and acceptance in the words of those who have come before him. Essex Hemphill, a Lambda Literary Award winner and recipient of the National Library Association's New Authors in Poetry award contributes, "I Am A Homosexual," extolling the ironic isolation of being gay and black, and encouraging individuals to live openly within both communities.

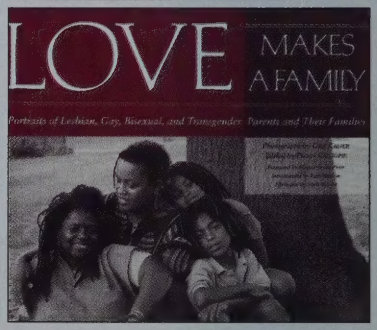


Love Makes a Family

Gigi Kaeser and Peggie Gillespie
University of Massachusetts Press, 1999

Love makes a Family combines interviews and photographs to document the experience of lesbian, gay bisexual and trans parents and their families. It allows all of the family members - including the children- to speak candidly about their lives, their relationships, and the ways in which they have dealt with the pressures of homophobia. "At the most basic level, Love Makes a Family combats that homophobia by breaking silence and making the invisible visible," said Peggy Gillespie, editor of the exhibit and book version.

"The religious right say gay people shouldn't have families because it will hurt our children in bad ways. But we aren't the perpetrators of hatred. We are the ones who are living our lives trying to pass on the same good values that our families passed on to us. These folks who are against us are the ones who are hurting our children, not us. We have to help our children understand that these people are wrong and that we have to live our lives with pride." --Doug Robinson, New York City School Board, Gay African-American father.



YOURS IN THE STRUGGLE: an interview with Barbara Smith

Jean Pierre Campbell

Barbara Smith is a literary critic and progressive feminist. Her essay, "Toward a Black Feminist Criticism," in Condition (1977), alerted the world to her cogent and incisive criticism. There, she interpreted Toni Morrison's book, Sula, as a lesbian novel because of the implicit lesbian relationship between the two primary women characters. Smith is an independent scholar who played a groundbreaking role in opening a national cultural and political dialogue concerning the interactions of race, class, sexuality and gender.

ISREAL WRIGHT

Her latest book is The Truth That Never Hurts: Writings on Race, Gender, and Freedom Following are excerpts from an interview Smith gave to Venus. Jean Pierre Campbell was the interviewer.

Q: At the BRC Gay/Lesbian Caucus, sisters outnumbered the brothers three to one. How do you explain that

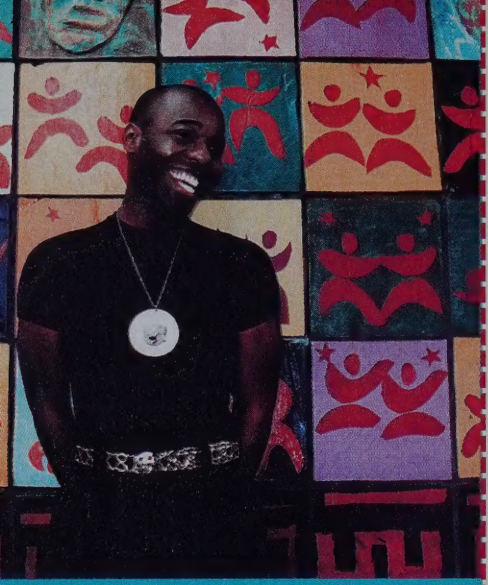
A: I think that the reason there were more women than men was because it was a progressive and left agenda. Because of our political orientation through feminism and other movements, black lesbian feminists have had more of an opportunity to be exposed to progressive, radical ideology and practice than any black gay male coming through the gay movement. The difference, I believe, is like, if you become politicized and your first political experience as a black gay male or as a man of color is in the mainstream boy-lead gay movement, then you're not progressive.

You don't have a chance to be progressive. That is not a progressive movement, particularly in its present incarnation. Since I have worked with gay men, black gay men in particular, I have been startled by their political perspective, as shaped by the white gay male agenda. That's why I'm always trying to get them to expose themselves to black feminism, because then one begins to see a different way of defining what politics are.

I'm not attributing negative motive. I'm talking about lived experience and how one's consciousness evolves. If one gets politicized in the context of a white gay male movement, one doesn't really have any exposure then to the ideas of progressive movements. If one gets politicized in the context of the feminist movement, then one's perspective about what is important is very, very different, particularly if you're talking about the most progressive or radical part of the movement. I'm not talking about bourgeois feminists, because there is a sector of the white women's movement that mirrors the white gay male movement, except it's not sexist and misogynist. It is conservative and bourgeois, accomodationist and single-issued.

"IF YOU BECOME POLITICIZED AND YOUR FIRST POLITICAL EXPERIENCE AS A BLACK GAY MALE OR AS A MAN OF COLOR IS IN THE MAINSTREAM BOY-LEAD GAY MOVEMENT, THEN YOU'RE NOT PROGRESSIVE."

This interview can be viewed in it's entirety (1200 words) at www.venusmagazine.com



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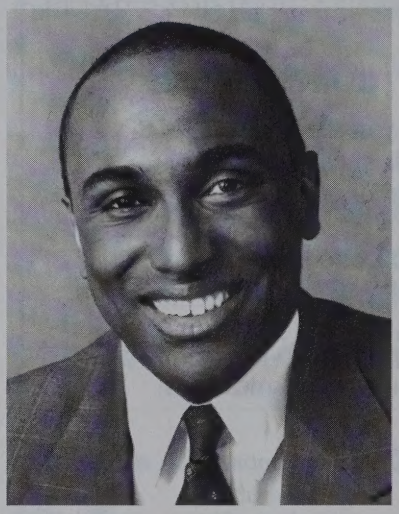
The Greening of Black Pride

By Bernard J. Tarver

The annual circuit of Black Pride celebrations gets into full swing this summer. It's our season. Things began with Philadelphia's Black and Latino Pride celebration last April. Houston also kicked off its Splash last May. To keep things rolling, Los Angeles lit up the beach on the 4th of July. New York's second annual Black Pride this summer is expected to keep things going. Atlanta closes things out with a Labor Day weekend gala.

The reasons for these --and other-- celebrations vary. One, of course, is to raise funds for local HIV/AIDS organizations, as is the case with Washington DC's Black Pride. On the other hand, some others are purely commercial ventures designed only to make profits for their organizers.



Until the end of the summer, approximately 16 cities will host Pride events and thousands upon thousands of black lesbians and gays will travel from around the country to those cities. Last year, Houston hosted five thousand visitors at its Splash, while Washington, DC Black Pride enjoyed twice that number.

It is estimated that $5 million was spent on DC Black Pride-related activities. How much of that money was spent on black-gay-owned or even black-owned products and services? Not just in DC, but at Pride events in other cities as well? How many of us used travel agencies or tour operations owned by blacks, or ate in black-owned or gay and lesbian-owned restaurants? Did we search out hotels, motels, or bed and breakfasts that are black-owned and operated?

Municipalities have warmed up to the fact that large numbers of people coming to them, regardless of race or sexual orientation, is good for business. Many of these cities work with Black Pride organizers to see that things run smoothly. Corporate America is also jumping on board, and offers discounts on airfares, car rentals and hotels.

If we took the $5 million figure estimated spent in DC, halved it to allow for smaller turnouts or lower expenses in other cities, then multiplied that $2.5 million by the 16 Black Pride events, we come up with $40 million spent by attendees at all of the Black Prides combined.

Even as a best guess, that is not an unrealistic amount. It's $40 million we spend making other people rich. Why not use it to benefit ourselves? How many black lesbian and gay-owned businesses could benefit by having a portion of that money?

How many black lesbian and gay-owned businesses could be started by tapping into that money? How many ways could we improve our lives if we started keeping more of that money in our hands?

We have many reason to be proud of our blackness and also our gayness and lesbianism. It is good that we come together periodically in celebration of our lives. It is better, if during those times of celebration we do more then just party, cruise and socialize. It is better that during this time we do for self and begin building a strong economic foundation. It is clear that we have the money. We now only need the vision to use it for our benefit. In so doing, we will begin to demonstrate real Black Pride.

"WE HAVE MANY REASON TO BE PROUD OF OUR BLACKNESS AND ALSO OUR GAYNESS AND LESBIANISM. IT IS GOOD THAT WE COME TOGETHER PERIODICALLY IN CELEBRATION OF OUR LIVES."

IN THE LIFE ITLA ATLANTA

Celebrating the Black Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered, Gay Community

Black Gay Pride '99

Labor Day Weekend Atlanta, Ga.

Return to Royalty: Reclaiming Our Heritage

ITLA is the "Official Host" of the Atlanta Black Pride Celebration. We anticipate 15,000 members and allies of the African-American Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, and Transgendered, SGL community from Atlanta, the Nation and abroad to join us for our exciting weekend of fun, culture and pride.

Sept. 2nd 6th

Itinerary

THURSDAY, September 2 — Candlelight Vigil & Remembrance Ceremony

FRIDAY, September 3 — Welcome Reception- 7:30PM • Fashion Show & Kick Off Party- 8:00PM

SATURDAY, September 4 — **Health And Wellness Symposium** • Health - Mind, Body & Spirit • Black Market Gender Reassignment • Healing Internalized Homophobia • Homosexuality, The Bible and Spirituality • Woymn's Health Initiative • Circle of Systas - For Systas Only • Deeper Love - For Brothas Only • Talking Youth - 24 and under • Innergy - A Family Gathering • **Cultural Arts Festival** • Literary Confab • Video & Film Festival • Speakfire - open mic poetry and performance art

SUNDAY, September 5 — Verspers • Interfaith Service • Six Flaggs Black Gay Pride Day ($35 includes admission, concert and buffet)

MONDAY, September 6 — Pool Party & Bar-B-Q

ALL Weekend — Poolside Events- Renaissance Atlanta Hotel (Host Hotel) • Youth Programming • Art Gallery • Marketplace • Travel Pavillion • Signature Series Events • ITLA Free Stage w/local and guest artists • Parties Around Town (Wed. Thurs. Weekend)

OTHER Events

Ms. Gay Pride International Pageant, Thursday September 2 — 9PM

Additional Events — TBA

Pride Passes Available

$50 in advance • $35 (youth)

Includes access to all ITLA events, discounts to select nightclubs, parties and other affiliated events around Hotlanta. Also includes other specials only offered through ITLA

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800-433-1790 — Code: 9089UQ

OFFICIAL CAR RENTAL — Avis Car Rental
800-331-1600 — Code: AWD#D900708

RAIL — Amtrak- 800-872-7245 — Code: X-40K-944

For other hotel, airline, car rental providers or special assistance, please call our "Official Travel Connection," Travel and Entertainment Management Group at 901-375-4010

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Cathy and Rita could have stayed late at work and looked really dedicated, but that would have entailed staying late at work and looking really dedicated.
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SPECIAL Sixth ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Venus

FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT IN THE LIFE
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Winter 1999

SEXY! Gretchen Palmer

What Black Parents Really Think
When They Find Out Their Child is Gay

Plus!
Me'Shell Ndegeocello
Eartha Kitt
Chanté Moore

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If you're HIV+,

Being HIV+ isn't easy.

It's a daily challenge that can take all you've got. It helps to have an advantage – to lighten your load and keep you going. Federal healthcare guidelines now call for including a potent protease inhibitor as part of combination treatments to fight HIV. Consider these reasons to make the protease inhibitor CRIXIVAN the foundation of your treatment regimen.

CRIXIVAN is a protease inhibitor that fights HIV. CRIXIVAN can help reduce the chance of illnesses and death associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 T-cell count. Some patients may not experience these effects. CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS.

NIH research showed people taking CRIXIVAN in triple therapy lived longer and experienced fewer opportunistic infections.

Recent year-long research conducted by the National Institutes of Health (Protocol ACTG 320) studied over 1,000 patients and confirmed results from another study.

The group of patients receiving CRIXIVAN along with 3TC and AZT achieved a reduction in deaths and AIDS-defining illnesses over those taking 3TC and AZT alone. This reduction was significant enough for the NIH to recommend the study be stopped, so that all participants could benefit from the findings. Because the study was ended early, there was insufficient data to determine the statistical impact of CRIXIVAN on survival.

CRIXIVAN in triple therapy continues to hold serum viral load down below the limit of detection at the one-year mark.

In a separate, ongoing landmark study, over 90% of the 31 patients receiving CRIXIVAN, AZT, and 3TC reduced their HIV serum viral load below the limit of detection after 24 weeks (as measured by available tests; the virus may still be present in other organ systems).

Importantly, the limited number of patients who chose to stay with the study for longer periods of time maintained these results through the one-year mark.

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CRIXIVAN may help you live a longer, healthier life.

CRIXIVAN is generally well tolerated.

CRIXIVAN can be taken with a light meal or on an empty stomach. There are side effects associated with protease inhibitors in general and CRIXIVAN in particular. Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN may develop kidney stones. For some, this can lead to more severe kidney problems including kidney failure. Drinking at least 6 glasses of water each day may help reduce the chance of forming a kidney stone. Other side effects reported include rapid breakdown of red blood cells and liver problems.

As with other protease inhibitors, changes in body fat, increased bleeding in some patients with hemophilia and increased blood sugar levels or diabetes have been reported. Additionally, severe muscle pain and weakness have occurred in patients also taking cholesterol lowering medicines called "statins". Please read the following page for detailed information on side effects and dosing.

Focus on the rest of your life.

Learn all you can about HIV therapy. Talk with your doctor. Stay informed and stay the course. With viral load below the limit of detection and an increase in CD4 T-cells, it's easier to look forward to the future with confidence.

There are some common medications and AIDS-related medications you should not take with CRIXIVAN. Discuss all medications you are taking or plan to take with your doctor.

Please read the following page for more detailed information about CRIXIVAN.

Remember to ask your doctor about CRIXIVAN.

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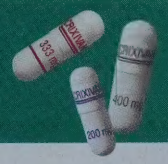

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Generic name: indinavir (in-DIH-nuh-veer) sulfate

9024509

Please read this information before you start taking CRIXIVAN. Also, read the leaflet each time you renew your prescription, just in case anything has changed. Remember, this leaflet does not take the place of careful discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss CRIXIVAN when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when using CRIXIVAN and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

What is CRIXIVAN?

CRIXIVAN is an oral capsule used for the treatment of HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus). HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). CRIXIVAN is a type of HIV drug called a protease (PRO-tee-ase) inhibitor.

How does CRIXIVAN work?

CRIXIVAN is a protease inhibitor that fights HIV. CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 (T) cell count. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

CRIXIVAN is usually prescribed with other anti-HIV drugs such as ZDV (also called AZT), 3TC, ddI, ddC, or d4T. CRIXIVAN works differently from these other anti-HIV drugs. Talk with your doctor about how you should take CRIXIVAN.

CRIXIVAN has been studied in adults. The safety and effectiveness of CRIXIVAN in children and adolescents have not been established.

How should I take CRIXIVAN?

There are six important things you must do to help you benefit from CRIXIVAN:

1. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every day as prescribed by your doctor.** Continue taking CRIXIVAN unless your doctor tells you to stop. Take the exact amount of CRIXIVAN that your doctor tells you to take, right from the very start. To help make sure you will benefit from CRIXIVAN, you must not skip doses or take "drug holidays". If you don't take CRIXIVAN as prescribed, the activity of CRIXIVAN may be reduced (due to resistance).
2. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every 8 hours around the clock, *every day.*** It may be easier to remember to take CRIXIVAN if you take it at the same time every day. If you have questions about when to take CRIXIVAN, your doctor or health care provider can help you decide what schedule works for you.
3. **If you miss a dose by more than 2 hours, wait and then take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time.** However, if you miss a dose by less than 2 hours, take your missed dose immediately. Then take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. Do not take more or less than your prescribed dose of CRIXIVAN at any one time.
4. **Take CRIXIVAN with water.** You can also take CRIXIVAN with other beverages such as skim or non-fat milk, juice, coffee, or tea.
5. **Ideally, take each dose of CRIXIVAN without food but with water at least one hour before or two hours after a meal.** Or you can take CRIXIVAN with a light meal. Examples of light meals include:
   - dry toast with jelly, juice, and coffee (with skim or non-fat milk and sugar if you want)
   - corn flakes with skim or non-fat milk and sugar

   Do not take CRIXIVAN at the same time as any meals that are high in calories, fat, and protein (for example — a bacon and egg breakfast). When taken at the same time as CRIXIVAN, these foods can interfere with CRIXIVAN being absorbed into your bloodstream and may lessen its effect.
6. **It is critical that you drink at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquids (preferably water) throughout the day, every day. CRIXIVAN can cause kidney stones.** Having enough fluids in your body should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

Does CRIXIVAN cure HIV or AIDS?

CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking CRIXIVAN may still develop infections or other conditions associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important for you to remain under the care of a doctor. Although CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS, CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses, including death, associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

Does CRIXIVAN reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

CRIXIVAN has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

Who should not take CRIXIVAN?

Do not take CRIXIVAN if you have had a serious allergic reaction to CRIXIVAN or any of its components.

What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor?

Talk to your doctor if:

- You are pregnant or if you become pregnant while you are taking CRIXIVAN. We do not yet know how CRIXIVAN affects pregnant women or their developing babies.
- You are breast-feeding. You should stop breast-feeding if you are taking CRIXIVAN.

Also talk to your doctor if you have:

- Problems with your liver, especially if you have mild or moderate liver disease caused by cirrhosis.
- Problems with your kidneys.
- Diabetes
- Hemophilia
- High cholesterol and you are taking cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins".

Tell your doctor about any medicines you are taking or plan to take, including non-prescription medicines.

Can CRIXIVAN be taken with other medications?**

Drugs you should not take with CRIXIVAN:

SELDANE® (terfenadine)	HISMANAL® (astemizole)
VERSED® (midazolam)	HALCION® (triazolam)
PROPULSID® (cisapride)	Ergot medications (e.g., Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

Taking CRIXIVAN with the above medications could result in serious or life-threatening problems (such as irregular heartbeat or excessive sleepiness).

In addition, you should not take CRIXIVAN with rifampin, known as RIFADIN®, RIFAMATE®, RIFATER®, or RIMACTANE®.

Drugs you can take with CRIXIVAN include:

RETROVIR® (zidovudine, ZDV also called AZT)	EPIVIR™ (lamivudine, 3TC)
ZERIT® (stavudine, d4T)	isoniazid (INH)
BACTRIM®/SEPTRA® (trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole)	DIFLUCAN® (fluconazole)
BIAXIN® (clarithromycin)	ORTHO-NOVUM 1/35® (oral contraceptive)
TAGAMET® (cimetidine)	Methadone

VIDEX® (didanosine, ddI) — If you take CRIXIVAN with VIDEX®, take them at least one hour apart.

MYCOBUTIN® (rifabutin) — If you take CRIXIVAN with MYCOBUTIN®, your doctor may adjust both the dose of MYCOBUTIN and the dose of CRIXIVAN.

NIZORAL® (ketoconazole) — If you take CRIXIVAN with NIZORAL®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

RESCRIPTOR® (delavirdine) — If you take CRIXIVAN with RESCRIPTOR®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

SPORANOX® (itraconazole) — If you take CRIXIVAN with SPORANOX®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

SUSTIVA™ (efavirenz) — If you take CRIXIVAN with SUSTIVA™, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

Talk to your doctor about any medications you are taking.

What are the possible side effects of CRIXIVAN?

Like all prescription drugs, CRIXIVAN can cause side effects. The following is **not** a complete list of side effects reported with CRIXIVAN when taken either alone or with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN developed kidney stones. In some of these patients this led to more severe kidney problems, including kidney failure or inflammation of the kidneys. Drinking at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquid (preferably water) each day should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had rapid breakdown of red blood cells (hemolytic anemia) which in some cases was severe or resulted in death.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had liver problems including liver failure and death. Some patients had other illnesses or were taking other drugs. It is uncertain if CRIXIVAN caused these liver problems.

Diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) have occurred in patients taking protease inhibitors. In some of these patients, this led to ketoacidosis, a serious condition caused by poorly controlled blood sugar. Some patients had diabetes before starting protease inhibitors, others did not. Some patients required adjustments to their diabetes medication. Others needed new diabetes medication.

In some patients with hemophilia, increased bleeding has been reported.

Severe muscle pain and weakness have occurred in patients taking protease inhibitors, including CRIXIVAN, together with some of the cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins." Call your doctor if you develop severe muscle pain or weakness.

Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking protease inhibitors. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs and arms may also happen. The cause and long term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

Clinical Studies

Increases in bilirubin (one laboratory test of liver function) have been reported in approximately 10% of patients. Usually, this finding has not been associated with liver problems. However, on rare occasions, a person may develop yellowing of the skin and/or eyes.

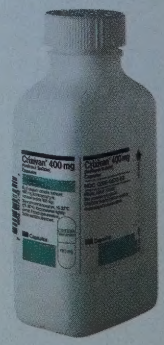
Side effects occurring in 2% or more of patients included: abdominal pain, fatigue or weakness, flank pain, feeling unwell, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, acid regurgitation, loss of appetite, dry mouth, back pain, headache, trouble sleeping, dizziness, taste changes, rash, upper respiratory infection, dry skin, and sore throat.

Swollen kidneys due to blocked urine flow occurred rarely.

Marketing Experience

Other side effects reported since CRIXIVAN has been marketed include: allergic reactions; severe skin reactions; yellowing of the skin and/or eyes; abdominal swelling; indigestion; inflammation of the kidneys; inflammation of the pancreas; joint pain; depression; itching; hives; change in skin color; hair loss; ingrown toenails with or without infection; crystals in the urine; painful urination; and numbness of the mouth.

Tell your doctor promptly about these or any other unusual symptoms. If the condition persists or worsens, seek medical attention.



How should I store CRIXIVAN capsules?

- Keep CRIXIVAN capsules in the bottle they came in and at room temperature (59°- 86°F).
- Keep CRIXIVAN capsules dry by leaving the small desiccant "pillow" in the bottle. Keep the bottle closed.

This medication was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep CRIXIVAN and all medicines out of the reach of children. If you suspect that more than the prescribed dose of this medicine has been taken, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

This leaflet provides a summary of information about CRIXIVAN. If you have any questions or concerns about either CRIXIVAN or HIV, talk to your doctor.

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West Point, PA 19486, USA

CRIXIVAN® (indinavir sulfate) Capsules

MERCK

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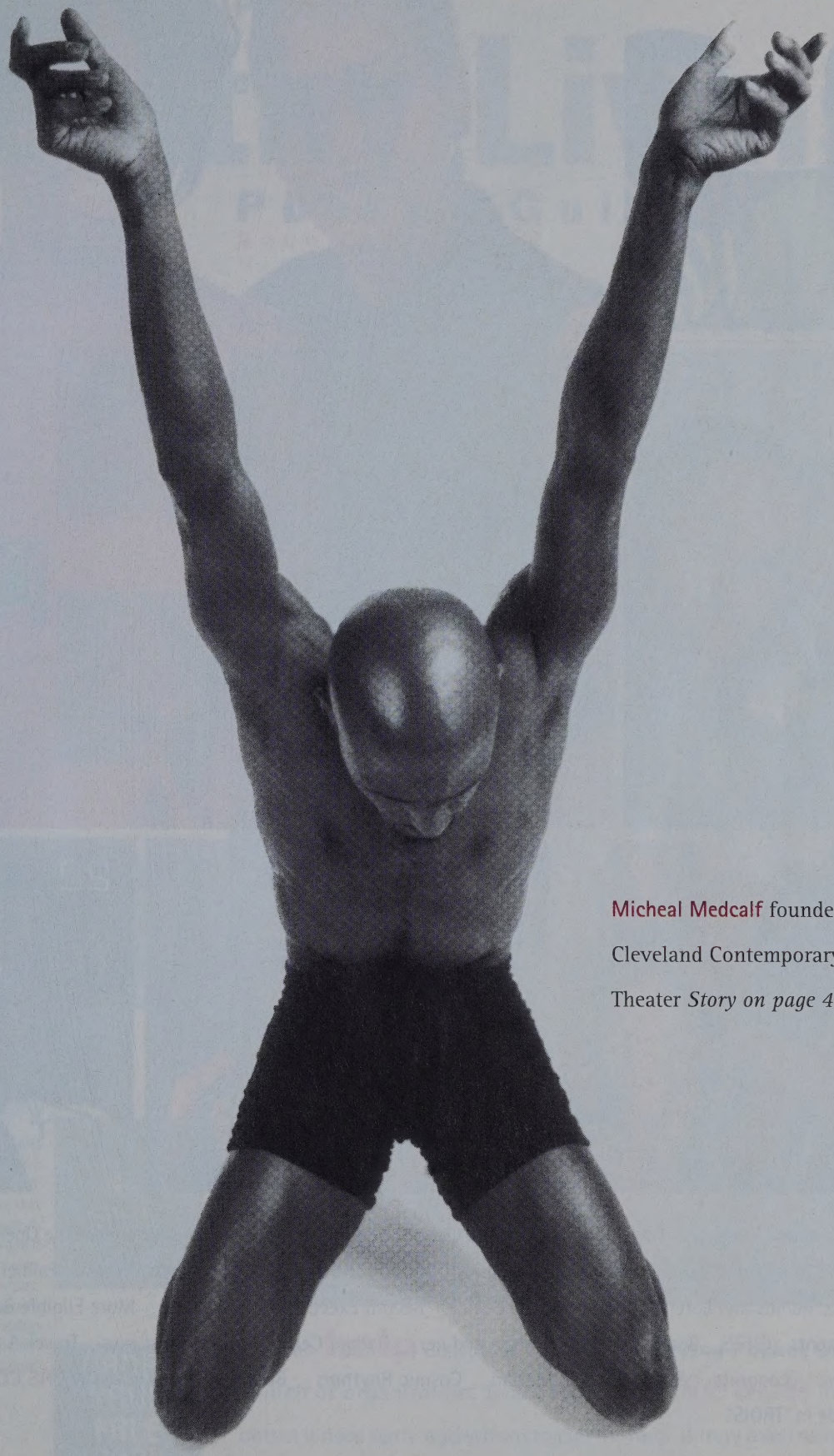
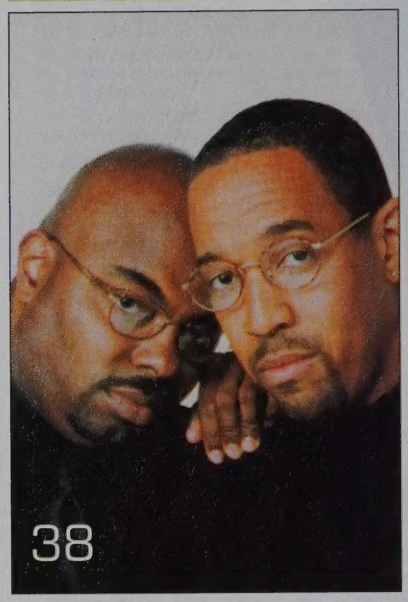
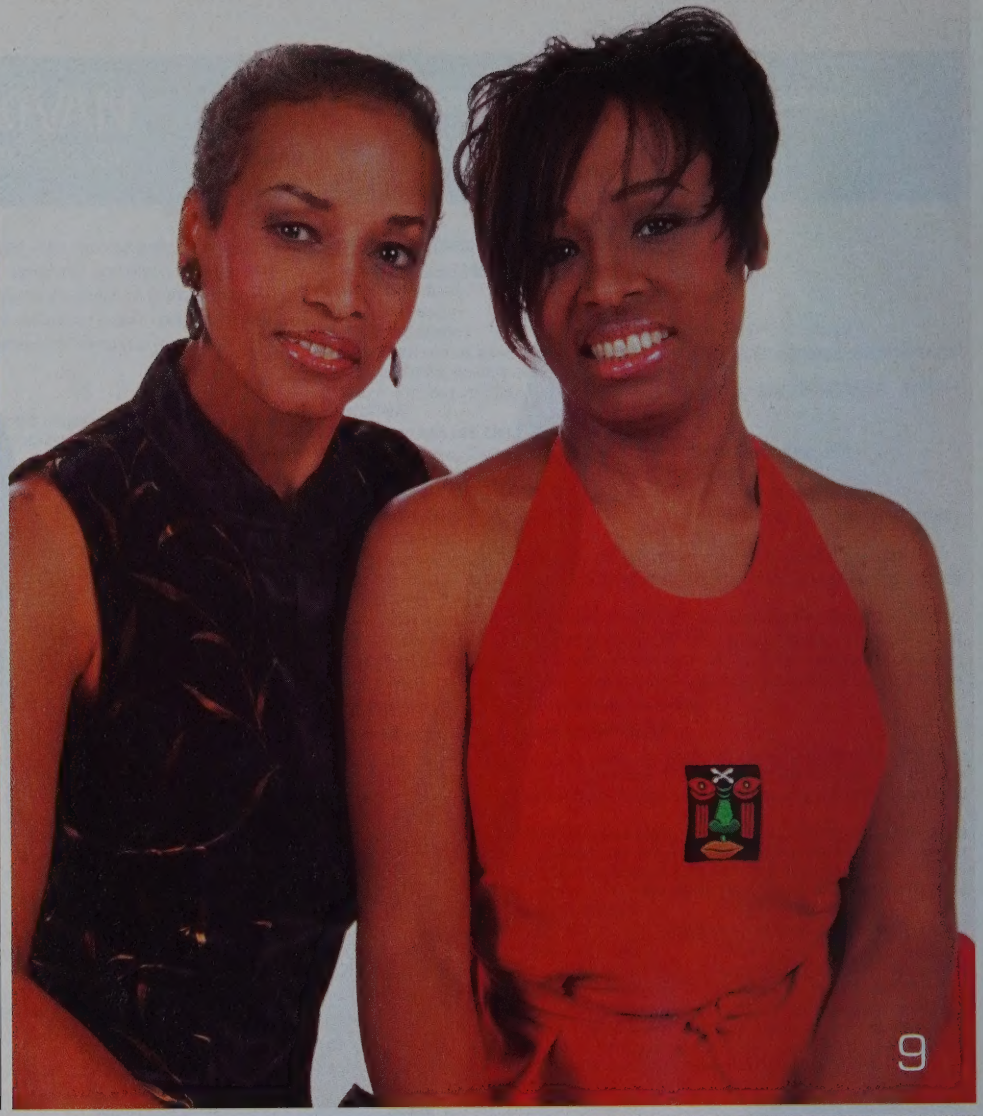
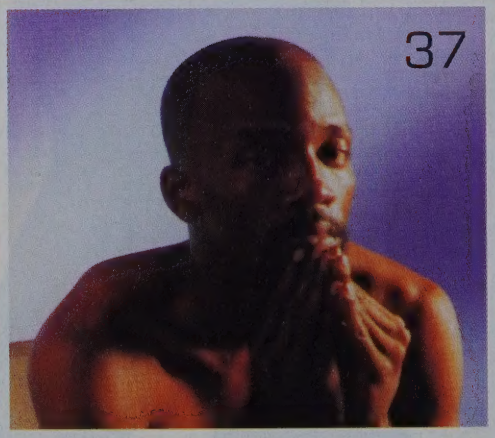


Micheal Medcalf founder of Cleveland Contemporary Dance Theater *Story on page 40*







FEATURES _**Love and Liberation Theology in Action**-Author Al Cunningham visits Chicagoís Church of the Open Door __Will the Circle Be Unbroken?-Black Parents tell their ëcoming outí stories__**Sexy!** A conversation with Actress Gretchen Palmer 27 **Twenty Questions**-Publishers Ricc Rollins and Lorenzo C. Robertson **PEOPLE**__Record Executive Ana Iza Otis__ More Eligible Bachelors!__Millennium Calendar of events **GIFTS**__Beauty products for him and her__ Gadget Central-all the latest toys__Travel-A trip to Eden **IN EVERY ISSUE**__letters __congrats __Sex Talk__Ask Marian __Cosmic Rhythms __Books __BrothaTalk **ON THE COVER** Gretchen Palmer, starring as Jade in "TROIS".

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Present:

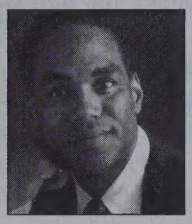
Healthy Living

Pocket Guide

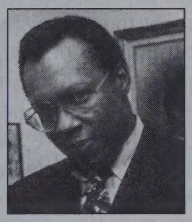
Second Edition

A Resource Guide for African Americans

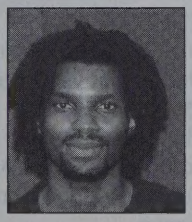
Pernessa C. Seele
Founder/CEO
The Balm In Gilead
New York City, NY
"One of the most frequent requests we receive is to identify culturally competent HIV/AIDS resources available for Black people. *The Healthy Living Pocket Guide* speaks directly to that need."



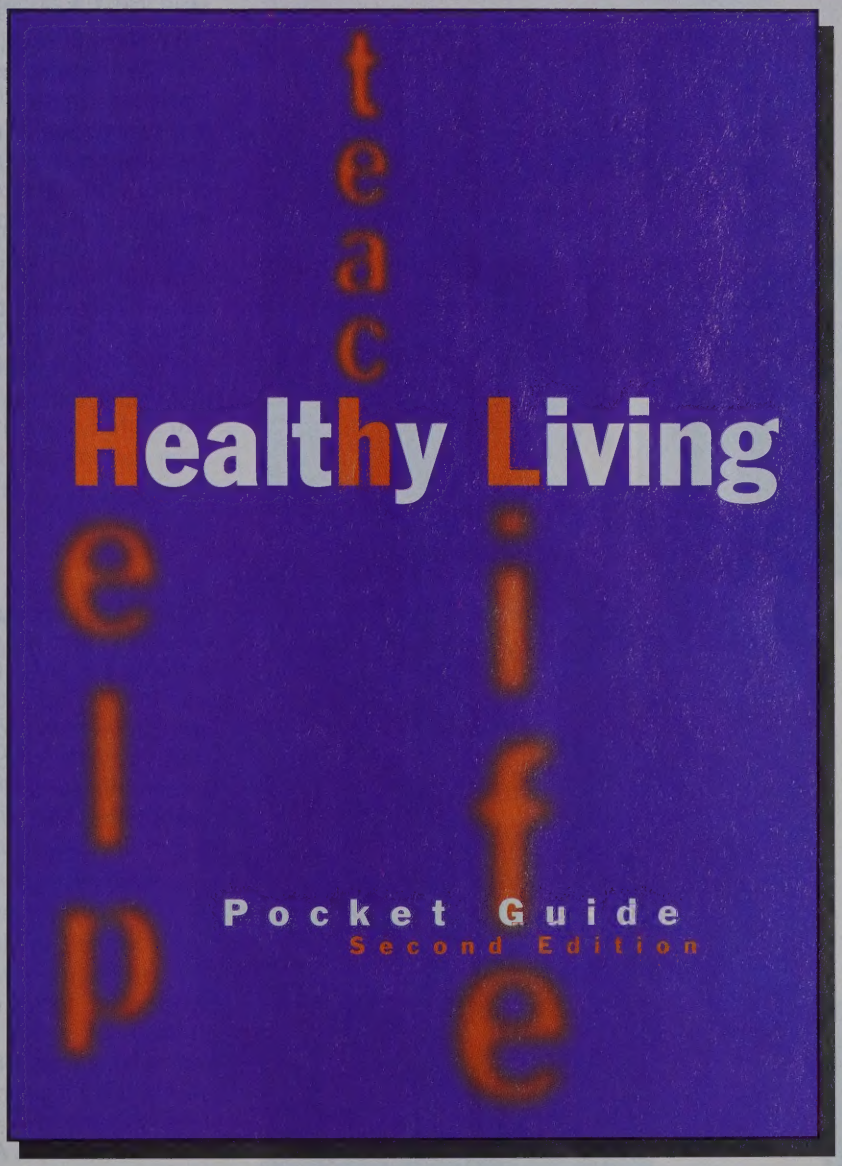
Phill Wilson
Executive Director,
African American AIDS
Policy and Training Institute
"The Healthy Living Pocket Guide is vital. It is a handy service delivery resource guide, and it presents the straight dope on a number of diseases in an accessible format."



Dr. Stephen B. Thomas
Rollins School of Public
Health Emory University
Atlanta, Georgia
"Information is power. Here, in one place, you can get the telephone numbers, addresses (including E-mail) and even websites of agencies around the country that deal with health problems affecting the African American community."



LeRoy Whitfield
AIDS activist, freelance
writer *Chicago, IL*
"I've never found a resource that packs so much useful information into a concise guide and it doesn't just stop at AIDS prevention and treatment resources. *The Healthy Living Pocket Guide* has got it covered by providing addresses, numbers and contacts in your neck of the 'hood."

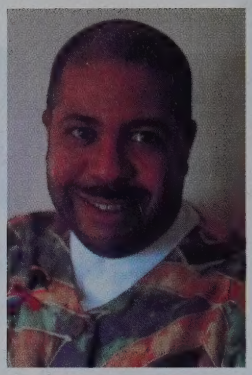


ORDER YOUR FREE COPY TODAY!

You can **help** distribute **The Healthy Living Pocket Guide** in your church or organization. This free guide can **teach** many how to detect illness early and whom to call for help. It may even save the **life** of someone you love. Call to order free copies in large quantity.

A Cothran Publication **1. 800. 642. 7535**

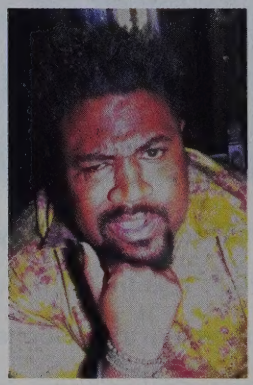
contributors



Al Cunningham is a San Francisco-based writer and producer whose current projects as co-director of the Yours in the Struggle Project include "Don't Go There!," an interactive "dramedy," and a website at www.2bfree.com. A native Chicagoan and former Howard University School of Divinity and Starr King School for the Ministry student, he is an active lay person at the Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples, San Francisco.

Nigel Jackson A native of Virginia, home to Missy Elliot, Timberland, Teddy Riley, and Roberta Flack, Nigel Jackson, the Capricorn Prince, is CEO of PSPEntertainment, a Public Relations and Marketing company. He's worked with female rapper Roxanne Shante and has close ties with Chaka Khan and her sister Taka Boom. He's editor in chief of Taka's Official International Newsletter and is president of her Friends of Taka Club. He also contributes to Chaka's Official newsletter and has helped in organizing Chaka's Press Meetings. He's currently preparing to release his first CD featuring some of his most requested dance, hip hop and R&B singles and He's performed in various night clubs, and has managed several acts.

Tina Paul has been a photographer since her late teens when she first photographed disco performers in her native Miami Beach. She has lived in New York City for more than a decade and continues to photograph nightlife and its stars. Her work is included in books and magazines worldwide and she has contributed to Venus since 1997.



Anderson Jones who profiles Gretchen Palmer in this issue, wrote essays on gay men in long-term relationships for Running Press *Men Together* book and is a regular contributor to The Advocate, Teen People and TV Guide. He is a senior editor for E! Online in Los Angeles.

A Letter to Our Parents

What a special issue this is! We welcome our parents to the Venus family. We know what it's been like for most of you. Coming to grips with having a gay or lesbian child isn't an easy process for any parent. It is especially tough on Black parents. When we came out of the closet, you had to come out too. You haven't had the kinds of support you need and we [your gay children] are so busy dealing with our own coming out issues that we haven't always been there for you.

Your life experiences have taught you that what people think does matter. You've always wanted the very best for us and you feel that our 'choice' will limit our careers and access to the 'good life'. And so you are concerned about our futures as well as your own status in the family, church and community [not to mention the fear that you may not have grandchildren.] Most often you knew of our status before we did, yet you may still be secretly clinging to the hope that our being gay is a phase.

The most important message for you to get from this issue is to know that you are not alone. There are hundreds of thousands of Black parents out there who feel just you do. Black parents need each other for support. The church doesn't address this need and you can't always talk to family, friends or co-workers. But there is something you can do. You can contact one of several support groups for parents of Black gays and lesbians. If you can't find a group in your area, you should seriously think about starting one. Existing support groups and PFLAG [Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, a national group of mostly white parents] can show you how.

The values that you have instilled in us are still very much a part of our lives. We believe in honoring the creator. We believe in strong family ties. We believe in building a wonderful and secure home life with a loving mate. We believe in caring for our parents when they are no longer able to care for themselves. We believe in you. Thank you for all that you've done to make us who we are. As a parent, you've done a great job.

Charlene Cothran,
Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

"OUR COMMUNITIES NEED TO SEE THESE IMAGES TO REMIND THEM OF WHOM WE ARE: TEACHERS, MINISTERS, BUSINESSMEN, DOCTORS, LAWYERS, MUSICIANS, AND THE LIST GOES ON."

BEAUTIFUL BROTHAS

I would like to commend the Venus staff for a very interesting and fun issue (Swimsuit Issue-Vol.5 No.2). I opened and read it on the bus this morning, (and didn't mind sharing it with the lady sitting next to me). I found The 7 Most Eligible Black Gay Men to be a noteworthy article. I have never seen this feature in your magazine before (nor any other). I support the idea of it becoming a regular feature. It's a very positive thing to see beautiful brothas who want to build their lives with each other, although I am not looking for a man. I've been in a relationship for the last seven years with another brotha I love (and like) very much. We took the time to become friends first and respect each other as individuals. We didn't fall in love with our fantasies of each other. Personally, I am finding that this is an ongoing process. My man and I are as different as night and day and sometimes those differences can drive me insane. OH !! THOSE DIFFERENCES !! But he's mine, idiosyncrasies and all. Everyday is NOT gonna come up roses. And when tough times appear, that is not the time to throw in the towel. It will be the time, however, to see what your relationship is really made of. When I detect the faint jealousy and wishfulness in other dudes who are not in my position, I have to remind myself that God blessed us for a purpose. I pray blessings on the brothers out there looking -- just be ready when it happens. Honesty, respect and flexibility have to be up front and then all those romantic evenings will just flow.

cjarrell
via the internet

KEEP IT COMING

As someone with four tattoos myself, I really appreciated seeing your full spread on the art of tattooing, [Vol.5 No.2]. So many black folks look strangely on the practice, it was nice to read your public explanation of it's origins among people of color. And DeAlan Wilson's photography brought the images boldly to life. I also liked seeing the Eligible Bachelors section. I was especially pleased to see a couple of brothers I know chosen. Definitely keep it coming, but add women to the mix too. (Can't leave the sisters out.) Overall Venus is getting better with every issue. The format, the style, the content -- all are showing the signs of growth that indicate Venus will be around for a long time. Thanks for a quality product that comes from our community, for our community.

Malik M.L. Williams
Atlanta, GA

RUTH ELLIS

I just wanted to send you a quick note and say how much I enjoyed the last issue of Venus. I especially appreciated the feature on Ruth Ellis, I met her many years ago in Washington, DC and was so awed by her -- and the photographs were fabulous!

Cathy Renna
Director of Community Relations
GLAAD

Venus™

FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT IN THE LIFE

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POINTLESS

I'm writing in response to the very thoughtful 'To the Point' article "Terms of Endearment" by Don Charles, [Vol.5 No.1]. I too am quite tired of the pseudo intellectualization that seeks to sell the notion that bleaching a toxic word [fag, nigga, etc.] makes it palatable and empowering. To stand before our oppressors and taunt them with "your words can no longer hurt me because I now use them on myself" seems reactionary and pointless. Maybe instead of watering these deadly "weeds" we need to uproot them and make room for some "flowers."

Victor R. Pond
AIDS Foundation of Chicago

CONTACT INFO

In your special swimsuit issue you have an article entitled "The 7 Most Eligible Bachelors" but nowhere in the article do you list how to contact the bachelors. Help! Also - I would like to compliment you on a very attractive magazine. It's entertaining AND full of substance. Go on with your bad selves! I'll keep looking for you. Peace and keep up the great work.

A Friend
via the internet

Note: All the brothas from the Bachelors column can be reached directly at our website! Go to www.venusmagazine.com to reach them by email, snail mail or by phone!

THE GOOD LIFE

I thoroughly enjoyed your first column on 'Eligible Bachelors' and wish to see it continued in every issue. Seeing positive depictions of accomplished gay black men revitalizes my hope that having the 'good life' can be achieved in this 'gay life.' Now, please tell me how we can contact these fine brothas! Thanks for the Surge

via the internet

READY TO SETTLE DOWN

The latest issue of Venus Magazine excited me cover to cover. What a great idea-The seven most Eligible Bachelors! Jerry....Kurt....How do we get in touch with these brothers??? It is nice to see that some of us are ready to "settle down." The article was right, "the scene," gets tired after a while and as each of us matures, we wonder is it more to life than "another party." Nice of Venus Magazine to have printed this sentiment. Thanks for showing us who is looking to find someone meaningfully, open to finding a meaningful connection. Also nice was the article on Ruth Ellis. Perhaps Venus can cover more views on what it means to mature in the gay world, mature chronologically and emotionally. Some of your readers are young, and perhaps need to feel that it's okay to "grow up." Also, thank you for making the article, "Black and Gay in Corporate America" available to read on the internet. It was very insightful and helpful.
Keep up the fine work.

dolmobc@juno.com
via the internet

TIP OF THE ICEBERG

I salute you for your recent article featuring Seven Beautiful Black Brothers who are doing it for themselves and their communities. I am inspired by their stories and the lives they are living. We are so often inundated with negative images of African-Americans in the media. Your article is a splendid example of how no one can tell our story like we can. Our communities need to see these images to remind them of who we are...teachers, ministers, businessmen, doctors, lawyers, musicians, and the list goes on. The seven you feature are just the tip of the iceberg. Thank you for a glimpse at the tip!

Johnnie A. Lee, M.D.
Fuquay Varina, NC

LOOKS GOOD!

Congratulations on your international success! I was in a bookstore here in Amsterdam last week and happened to see the latest edition of Venus Magazine. Looks good. You have truly lived up to your vision. Life is great here in northern Europe. Two years ago now I met my partner and moved here from Atlanta, GA. We're now working, enjoying our new home on the canals, and just expressing our GOD selves to the fullest.
Upholding the Light,

Kamau Ifoma
Founding Spiritual Editor
Venus Magazine 1994-1996
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

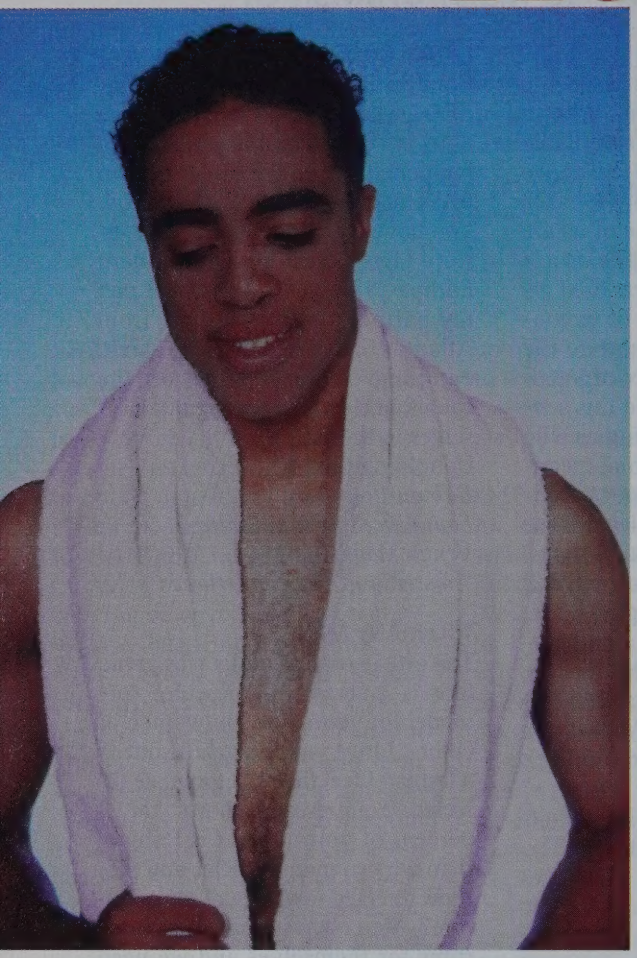
TOO MANY MEN

The article on Ruth Ellis was great. She is a powerful, positive role model for young lesbian women of color. I love your magazine but as a lesbian I feel that it is too male directed. Your research shows that 53 percent of your market is lesbian, then why so many articles and pictures directed toward gay male culture? Men have so many other forums for themselves and we need more forums that cater to the lesbian community. We like opening your book and seeing more pictures and articles about OUR issues and less male oriented ones.

M.D.L.
via the internet

Dear Sister,
Thank you for letting us know how you feel. The brothas tend to respond 5-to-1 over women to our calls for photos and bios. We are currently doing a national search for up-and-coming and accomplished women to feature for various stories ideas. For you Sistahs out there who are out, and willing to send in a photo and short bio, we are definitely interested in talking to you! Be sure to include a day and evening phone number. Send to: Venus Magazine Attn: Womens' Stories! P.O.Box 150 Hastings on Hudson, NY 10706 or email editor@venusmagazine.com

Holiday Stocking Stuffers



Misting Massage Shower Head

Private time in a luxurious bath or shower is always welcomed after a vigorous workout. Relax sore muscles, loosen tense shoulders, or simply escape with the new Misting Massage Shower Head. The five standard settings include the Misting Spray, the Morning Surf Massage, the Monsoon Spray, the Bay Shore Spray and the Body Spray. Models offering seven settings also include the Sea Foam Spray and the Evening Tide Spray settings.

Warp Speed Shaver

Twice as fast as conventional electric razors, the Linear Shavers will cut his shaving time in half and delivers constant shaving speeds through thick beards and won't slow down. They can be used wet or dry and come with a deluxe travel case and a charging stand.

Gorgeous Skin

Beautiful skin is a gift. Now, it's a gift you can give with Panasonic's revolutionary new electronic Panasonic Pore Cleanser featuring technology to go deep and clean below the surface to actively remove dirt and oil, while actually improving the firmness and overall pore appearance of your skin. Five minutes a day - twice a week-- is all it takes!

Man-for-Man

N10Z, (pronounce INTENSE), by 10% Productions is the first-ever man-for-man human pheromone. Designed to heighten attraction, N10Z is offered as a fragrance-free, alcohol-based concentrate in two sizes. A perfect gift available in individually boxed bottles.

Essentials for Him

Woman-to-Woman

Customize your scent with Perfumers Paintbox. The fragrances citrus, wood, musk, herbal and floral can be uniquely combined by simply brushing across the top of the aromatic disc with the finger tips and applying the scent. As one layers or "paints" the the scents, one fragrance on top of the other, the aroma changes. Start the morning with a fresh citrus blend. As evening approaches, try a more sultry blend of musk, wood and floral.

Bare Escentuals Scented Lipstick & Lip Gloss Gift Set

The set includes one beach lipstick a nd one stone lip gloss for perfectly matching earth tones. Contains shea butter with moisturizers and roe-geranium essential oils for a nice fragrance. Also order the Holiday Lip gloss set. One gold and one silver lip gloss for festive occasions!

Dress her in Lather

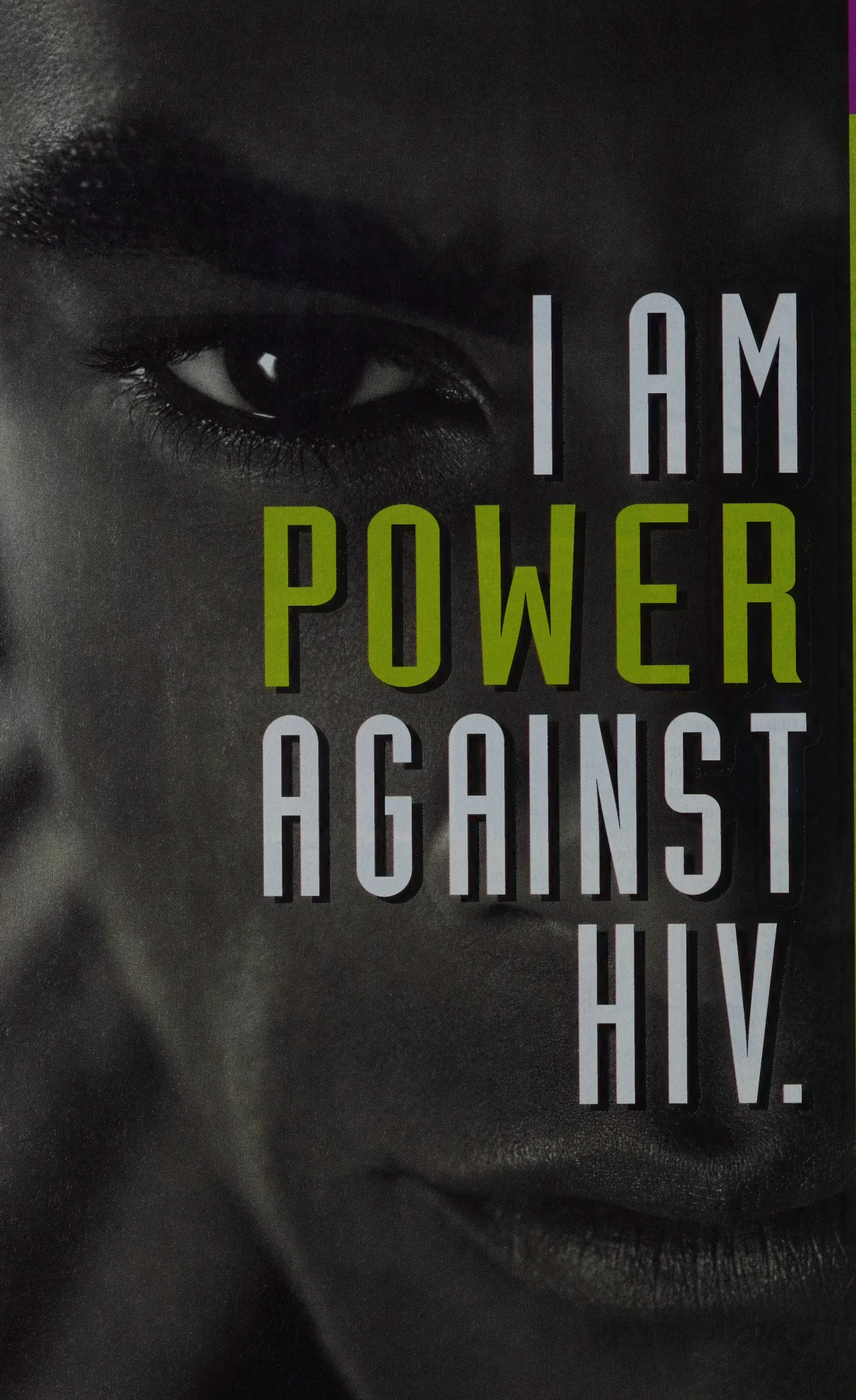
Primal Elements Soaps offers twelve new soap designs inspiring her to lure you in for a seductive bath for two. Bring in the millennium with the extravagant aroma of champagne and strawberries.

Smooches--A creamy lip-smackin' bar with a chocolate mint fragrance.

Lavender Oatmeal--Lavender calms and soothes the skin while oatmeal exfoliates gently.

& Her

See our Gift Buying Guide on page 72 to learn where to buy these products.


I AM
POWER
AGAINST
HIV.

Talk to your healthcare professional about ZIAGEN. Or call 1-888-TALK-2-GW (1-888-825-5249).

I am

Ziagen™

abacavir sulfate 300 mg tablets

I drive down viral load

Most people who took ZIAGEN with two other nucleoside analogues as their first combination regimen achieved undetectable viral load through 16 weeks.* ZIAGEN does not cure HIV infection/AIDS or prevent passing HIV to others. It's not known whether taking ZIAGEN will slow the progress of HIV disease or help you live longer.

I am two pills a day, with or without food

The easy dosing of ZIAGEN—just one tablet in the morning and one at night, with or without food—simplifies your combination therapy.

I give you treatment options

ZIAGEN is powerful enough to achieve undetectable viral load when used in initial combination therapy*—for example, ZIAGEN + COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg) Tablets—and may preserve future treatment options. ZIAGEN can be effective in patients who have used anti-HIV drugs before, but the effects are less.

Important safety information

About 5% of patients (5 in 100) who take ZIAGEN have a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) that may result in death. IF YOU HAVE SKIN RASH OR TWO OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING SETS OF SYMPTOMS, STOP TAKING ZIAGEN AND CALL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY: fever, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain, severe tiredness, achiness, or generally ill feeling. A written list of these symptoms is on the Warning Card and Medication Guide provided by your pharmacist. You should carry the Warning Card with you.

If you must stop treatment with ZIAGEN because you have had this serious reaction, NEVER TAKE ZIAGEN AGAIN. If you take ZIAGEN again after you have had this serious reaction, WITHIN HOURS you may experience LIFE-THREATENING symptoms that may include LOWERING OF YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE OR DEATH.

A buildup of lactic acid and an enlarged liver, including fatal cases, have been reported rarely with HIV drugs of this type.

Most side effects were mild to moderate; the most common side effects were nausea, vomiting, malaise or fatigue, headache, diarrhea, and loss of appetite. Most of these side effects did not cause people to stop taking ZIAGEN.

*71% (62/87) of patients taking ZIAGEN with lamivudine + zidovudine in this clinical trial had viral load undetectable below 400 copies/mL using the Roche Amplicor HIV-1 MONITOR® Test.

Please see important information for ZIAGEN and COMBIVIR on adjacent pages.

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www.ZIAGEN.com

Glaxo Wellcome HIV

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Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
Web site: www.glaxowellcome.com

MEDICATION GUIDE

ZIAGEN™ (z-EYE-uh-jen) (abacavir sulfate) Tablets and Oral Solution

Established name: abacavir (uh-BACK-ah-veer) sulfate tablets and oral solution

In order to take Ziagen safely, you should read all of the information in this Medication Guide each time you fill your prescription for Ziagen.

What is the most important information I should know about Ziagen?

About 5% of patients (5 in 100) who take Ziagen have a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) **that may result in death.** If you have **skin rash** or two or more of the following sets of symptoms, you may be having this kind of reaction:

- **fever**
- **nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain**
- **severe tiredness, achiness, or generally ill feeling**

A written list of these symptoms is on the Warning Card provided by your pharmacist. You should carry this Warning Card with you. **IF YOU NOTICE THESE SYMPTOMS WHILE TAKING ZIAGEN, STOP TAKING ZIAGEN AND CALL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY.**

If you must stop treatment with Ziagen because you have had this serious reaction, **NEVER TAKE ZIAGEN AGAIN**. If you take Ziagen again after you have had this serious reaction, **WITHIN HOURS** you may experience **LIFE-THREATENING** symptoms that may include **LOWERING OF YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE OR DEATH**.

Ziagen can have other serious side effects. Be sure to read "What are the possible side effects of Ziagen?" in the section to the right.

What is Ziagen?

Ziagen is a medication used to treat HIV infection. Ziagen is taken by mouth as a tablet or a strawberry-banana flavored liquid. It belongs to a class of anti-HIV medicines called nucleoside analogue reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs). Ziagen is only proven to work when taken in combination with other anti-HIV medications. When used in combination with these other medications, Ziagen helps lower the amount of HIV found in your blood and keep your immune system as healthy as possible so that it can help fight infection. However, Ziagen does not have these effects in all patients.

Ziagen does not cure HIV infection or AIDS. At this time, there is no evidence that Ziagen will help you live longer or have fewer of the medical problems that are associated with HIV infection or AIDS. Because of this, you must be sure to be seen regularly by your health care provider.

Who should not take Ziagen?

Do not take Ziagen if you have ever had a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) to Ziagen. In such cases, you should return all of your unused Ziagen to your doctor or pharmacist for proper disposal.

How should I take Ziagen?

Take Ziagen exactly as your doctor prescribes it.

The usual dosage for adults (at least 16 years of age) is one 300-mg tablet twice a day.

Adolescents and children from 3 months to 16 years of age can also take Ziagen™ (abacavir sulfate) Tablets and Oral Solution. Your doctor will tell you if the oral solution or tablet is best for your child.

Also, your child's doctor will decide the right dose based on your child's weight and age. Ziagen has not been studied in children under 3 months of age.

Ziagen can be taken with food or on an empty stomach.

To help make sure that your anti-HIV therapy is as effective as it can be, be very careful to take all of your medication exactly as your doctor prescribed it and do not skip any doses.

If you miss a dose of Ziagen, take the missed dose immediately. Then, take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time.

When your supply of Ziagen and other anti-HIV drugs starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. It is very important that you take anti-HIV drugs as prescribed by your doctor because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if one or more of the drugs is stopped, even for a short time.

What should I avoid while taking Ziagen?

Ziagen has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination. Continue to practice safe sex while using Ziagen. Do not use or share dirty needles.

Talk to your doctor if you are pregnant or if you become pregnant while taking Ziagen. Ziagen has not been studied in pregnant women and the risk to the unborn child is not known.

Mothers with HIV should not breastfeed their infants because HIV in the breast milk can be passed to the infant.

What are the possible or reasonably likely side effects of Ziagen?

Some people have had a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) to Ziagen, which can be fatal. Instructions on how to recognize a possible reaction, as well as what to do if such a reaction is suspected, are discussed in the section "What is the most important information I should know about Ziagen?"

The class of medicines to which Ziagen belongs (NRTIs) can cause a condition called lactic acidosis, together with an enlarged liver. In some cases, this condition can be fatal. Women are more likely than men to experience this rare but serious side effect.

Ziagen can cause other side effects. In studies, the most common side effects with Ziagen were nausea, vomiting, malaise or fatigue, headache, diarrhea, and loss of appetite. Most of these side effects did not cause people to stop taking Ziagen. This listing of side effects is not complete. Your doctor or pharmacist can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects with Ziagen. Talk to your doctor promptly about any side effects you have.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Medication Guide. Ask a health care professional about any concerns about Ziagen. Professional labeling is available to your doctor and other health care professionals. If you want more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist to let you read the professional labeling.

GlaxoWellcome

Glaxo Wellcome Inc.
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

December 1998 MG - 001

This Medication Guide has been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration.

Patient Information about COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg) Tablets

for HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) Infection
Generic name: lamivudine/zidovudine tablets

Please read this information before you start taking COMBIVIR (pronounced KOM-bĭ-veer). Staying informed will help you to work more closely with your doctor and healthcare team to determine what is best for you. Remember, this information does not take the place of careful discussion with your healthcare provider. You should remain under a doctor's care when using COMBIVIR and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your healthcare provider.

What is COMBIVIR?

COMBIVIR is the brand name of a tablet that combines EPIVIR® Tablets (lamivudine tablets) [3TC®] and RETROVIR® (zidovudine) Tablets [AZT], two drugs which are used to treat HIV (human immunodeficiency virus). HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome).

How does COMBIVIR work?

COMBIVIR is a combination of lamivudine (la-MIV-u-deen) and zidovudine (zī-DOHV-u-deen), two medicines (nucleoside analogues) that slow down the replication of the HIV virus. This can reduce the virus' ability to infect new cells. It may help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 (T) cell count. Lamivudine plus zidovudine when used together can have stronger (synergistic) effects against the virus. COMBIVIR is a convenient way of taking lamivudine and zidovudine. COMBIVIR should usually be taken with other anti-HIV therapy.

Will COMBIVIR work the same as EPIVIR and RETROVIR taken together?

Yes, taking one COMBIVIR Tablet twice a day is the same as taking one EPIVIR 150 mg Tablet twice a day and either two RETROVIR 100 mg Capsules three times a day or one RETROVIR 300 mg Tablet twice a day.

How should I take COMBIVIR?

Take COMBIVIR as your doctor prescribes it. The recommended dose is one COMBIVIR Tablet orally two times a day, with or without food. To help make sure you will benefit from COMBIVIR, you must not skip doses or take "drug holidays."

What should I do if I miss a dose of COMBIVIR?

If you miss a dose by more than 4 hours, wait and then take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time. However, if you miss a dose by less than 4 hours, take your missed dose immediately. Then take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. Do not take more or less than your prescribed dose of COMBIVIR at any one time.

Does COMBIVIR cure HIV infection or AIDS?

No, there is not a cure for HIV infection or AIDS. People taking COMBIVIR may still develop infections or other illnesses associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important to remain under the care of a healthcare provider. Use of lamivudine plus zidovudine has been shown to help patients with HIV infection stay healthy and live longer.

Does COMBIVIR reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

No, COMBIVIR, as well as other HIV medications, has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

Who should not take COMBIVIR?

You should not take COMBIVIR if you have had a serious allergic reaction to either lamivudine or zidovudine.

Do not take COMBIVIR at the same time as EPIVIR or RETROVIR because they also contain lamivudine and zidovudine.

Individual dosing with EPIVIR plus RETROVIR, rather than COMBIVIR, should be considered for:

- A child under 12 years of age.
- A patient who weighs less than 110 pounds.
- Anyone who requires dosage adjustments due to drug side effects or poor kidney function.

What medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my healthcare provider?

Talk to your healthcare provider if:

- You are pregnant or if you become pregnant while taking COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg) Tablets. Ask your doctor about enrolling you in the Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry: 1-800-258-4263.
- You are breastfeeding. Mothers infected with HIV should not breastfeed their infants because HIV is present in breast milk.

Also talk to your doctor about:

- Problems with your blood counts.
- Problems with your muscles.
- Problems with your kidneys.
- Problems with your liver, especially if you have mild or moderate liver disease, such as hepatitis.

Can COMBIVIR be taken with other medications?

Yes, COMBIVIR can be taken with most medications, including most anti-HIV drugs. Be sure to tell your healthcare provider about all medications, over-the-counter or prescription, that you are taking.

What are the possible side effects of COMBIVIR?

Do not rely on this summary alone for information about side effects. Your healthcare provider can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects that may be relevant to you.

The safety of COMBIVIR is not expected to be different from the safety of EPIVIR and RETROVIR given separately.

In clinical studies of lamivudine plus zidovudine, side effects occurring in 5% or more of patients included: muscle and joint pain, headache, nausea, weakness and fatigue, nasal symptoms, cough, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting, neuropathy, trouble sleeping, fever or chills, loss of appetite, dizziness, abdominal pain or cramps, depression, skin rashes, and indigestion.

It's important to know that serious side effects can occur with COMBIVIR, such as a decrease in red and white blood cells and muscle damage. A buildup of lactic acid and an enlarged liver, including fatal cases, have been reported rarely with some HIV drugs, including nucleoside analogues.

For HIV-infected individuals, periodic blood tests are recommended. If certain changes occur in your laboratory results while you are taking COMBIVIR, particularly if you become anemic or if your white blood cell count falls too low, your medication may need to be adjusted; your doctor may prescribe EPIVIR plus RETROVIR separately in place of COMBIVIR.

Tell your doctor promptly about any side effects or other unusual symptoms you may experience.

Other Information

This medication is prescribed for a particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep COMBIVIR and all medicines out of the reach of children.

Like most prescription drugs, lamivudine and zidovudine were required to be tested on animals before they were allowed for human use. In animal studies with doses much higher than those used in humans, zidovudine was associated with vaginal tumors. Your healthcare provider can tell you more about how drugs are tested on animals and what the results of these tests may mean about safety for you.

How should I store COMBIVIR Tablets?

COMBIVIR Tablets may be stored at room temperature and do not require refrigeration.

This provides a summary of information about COMBIVIR. If you have any questions or concerns about COMBIVIR or HIV, talk to your healthcare provider.

Glaxo Wellcome
HIV
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Web site: www.glaxowellcome.com

CHURCH OF THE OPEN DOOR: LOVE AND LIBERATION THEOLOGY IN ACTION!

by AL CUNNINGHAM

Reverends Alma Faith Crawford and Karen Hutt.

The Church of the Open Door began meeting in late 1995 in the southside Chicago apartment of its co-founders, the Reverends Alma Faith Crawford and Karen Hutt. The church soon moved its services to the building occupied by Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity), claiming its rightful place as a part of the historic movement of African Americans which PUSH and its leader, the Reverend Jesse L. Jackson symbolize. On the first Sunday in October, 1996, the Church of the Open Door held its first service in its current home, a large church and education center on Chicago's southwest side. Only a few years before, the working-class white neighborhood, which has become largely Arab- and Mexican-American, would have been totally off-limits to all but the most courageous or foolhardy Black person of any ilk, much less the openly gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered African Americans who are the vast majority of worshippers at Open Door.

Moreover, the Church has developed strong relationships with community residents by being a good neighbor and responding to residents' needs. The church has developed the Open Door Center, a non-profit providing the leadership to make neighborhood programming happen, building relationships with its Mexican and Arab neighbors. Venus talked to the co-pastors about their personal and professional partnership.

ON THE CHURCH FAMILY

The Rev. Crawford: The Church of the Open Door was founded to be a Black church, in the Black community, anchored in Black culture, a Christian church that happens to be primarily a church of black lesbian, gay, transgendered and bisexual people, where we can bring all of who we are. That means that we have a lot of kids here, because a lot of us are parents. We have senior citizens here, because some of us live until our older years. What it represents for me is some of the lessons that I have learned, that nobody is going to do for us but us. We are the ones we've been waiting for.

ON THEIR MARRIAGE

The Rev. Hutt: It's tough sometimes [to work so closely together]. I think it was harder in the beginning because we were all-consumed with everything we were doing. Everything was new, we were trying to get things started, and we were starting our relationship at the same time. What really helped us was that we both knew that we'd really been called by God to do this work. And that's what's kept us grounded, and our relationship evolved over the time that we've been together, matured, and we got married last year.

ON PROFESSIONAL COMPATIBILITY

The Rev. Hutt: We have different styles of work, and that helps a lot. I have a background in business and administration, and I've run lots of big projects [such as the African Exhibit at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago]. Alma had already been to seminary; I was just starting. She'd already served churches, so she had a lot of experience about how to get a church started and I had information and skills about how to get programs started. Together, it sort of made for a good team.

ON RELIGIOUS TRADITION

The Rev. Crawford: We have to start independent institutions. I was baptized as an African Methodist, and the A.M.E. Church comes out of Richard Allen saying, "I can't sit in the back pew of this white church anymore." It comes out of saying, "I'm not gonna take these scraps when Christ has offered us a feast." And coming out of the homophobic Black churches, coming out of the racist white gay churches and starting an independent, Black lesbian, gay, transgendered, heterosexual, (we have everybody up in here!) bisexual church, that's independent, strong, that's viable, that's able to reach out and help other folks, I'm being faithful to my own tradition as an African American Christian.

ON FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS

The Rev. Crawford:
A lot of what we do at Church of the Open Door is strive to apply or engage the gospel of Jesus Christ to every aspect of who we are. There's a lot that we're able to do because we're so focused in terms of the community that we serve. We work to undermine the class system that's kept us apart. We affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person, that each person is made in the image of God. It's not just

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PHOTOGRAHY BY ISRAEL WRIGHT

"We affirm the inherent **worth and dignity** of every person, that each person is made in the image of God. It's not just about building self-esteem; it's about **building character**. Everyone is required to give service."

about building self-esteem; it's about building character. Everyone is required to give service.

Everyone is encouraged and given opportunities to look at our employment situation. How can we have a better employment situation? What education do we need? What provision are we making as a community for our children? We're all urged and taught how to deal with our money: How to tithe ten percent to build up our community. How to save ten percent to build toward our futures. And how to get comfortable with not having the latest of everything. How to disengage from this consumerist, materialist culture and really found our lives on some deeper, richer values. What can we do about domestic violence in our communities? It's one thing to deal with gay bashing and police violence, violence from the outside, which we engage very actively, but also, what can we do about the fact that we spank our children the way that we do? What can we do to stop ourselves from hitting our partners? We're working to create a much more holistic, healthy community.

We're working on building up a community that sees itself as so worthwhile that we would not even think of unprotected sex because we love ourselves too much, where we're all striving toward recovery from every disease, including addictions, from

heroin to binge spending to unprotected sex. Working to heal ourselves and our community, to become a part of God's healing agenda.

ON BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR

The Rev. Hutt: There was drug dealing going on across the street from the church and I took it personally. People had to pass through that on the way to church; I worked a lot with the police to get that stopped. And the neighbors took notice, so we developed good will in the neighborhood. And then we had a man who was a child molester on the street, who was bothering a neighbor's child, who exposed himself. One day, we cornered the guy, and the police came and took him away. These were very dramatic things that happened on the street. Then we began giving free space to an organization that was teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, but they didn't organize it very well, so we took over the program. Now we have 150 or 200 people coming through all morning long , every day for classes. But the main thing is, we wanted to figure out what it is people need and we asked them. We want people to feel comfortable and I'm a real stickler about how clean the building has to be. I don't want spots on the floor, because people need to be received in a way that's really open and where they feel it's really a welcoming environment for them.

ON LEADERSHIP

The Rev. Crawford: We're an unusual black gay organization in that we own property, we have paid staff, we have high technological capacity, we've been given a lot of marvelous resources. In Chicago, there hasn't been organizing among Black gay organizations to figure out what our agenda is with HIV. Fortunately, we were able to get some support from the AIDS Foundation to initiate a leadership roundtable so we can look at what we need to do in order to make the institutions that already exist in our community accessible to us as a community, whether its substance abuse resources or mental health, looking at the whole range of things. We're also doing some work nationally to bring together Black gay congregations, not to start a new denomination or a new organization, but to be resources to one another so that we can be more effective in our programming with children, with the elderly, to see if there are ways that we can have some common agenda so that we can speak with a national voice that's not out of Washington or New York, but that comes out of congregations in Atlanta, and Washington, and Brooklyn, and Seattle, and all these places where we are, to empower one another and create a different possibility for witness among our people.

The Church of the Open Door is located at 5954 South Albany Avenue (two blocks east of Kedzie Avenue), Chicago, Illinois 60629, Tel 773/778 3030, email opendooril@aol.com. Regular worship services take place Sundays at 4pm.

"who said that?"

"Black churches ARE doing something about AIDS. The most important way to engage Black churches is to show respect. We may have been slow to respond, but youíre not going to speed us up by beating us up."

---Julia Walker, director of Communications, The Balm In Gilead, Inc. speaking at the National Conference on African Americans and HIV, New York City.

BLACK MAINSTREAM CHURCHES SILENT ON GAY ISSUES

Gay and lesbian Americans are in a tug of war with the nation's largest mainstream religions, with some of the largest denominations railing against them as sinners who need to change while others are striving to love and accept their gay congregants, according to a report released by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation.

"Mixed Blessings: Mainstream Religion and Gay and Lesbian Americans" analyzes the major developments of 1998 with the 10 largest religions in this country with regard to gays and lesbians. "Mixed Blessings" looks at developments in the nine largest Christian denominations in America and the four major movements within Judaism. These include: The Roman Catholic Church, the Southern Baptist Convention, the United Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Three largely African-American denominations – the National Baptist Convention USA Inc., the Church of God in Christ and the African Methodist Episcopal Church are also included, but, unfortunately, there is little information available because they have tended to take relatively quiet or no public positions on the subject.

All I Want *for Christmas is* a Trip To Eden

Give the gift that says good bye to the wintertime blues--an exotic, sunny beach vacation at the newly renovated Coral Sands Hotel on Harbour Island, Bahamas. A tiny undiscovered Out Island only three miles long and one half miles wide, Harbour Island is famous for its pink sand beach, rated one of the top ten in the world, and clear turquoise water. The Coral Sands Hotel provides casual elegance at the island's only beach bar, Commander's Beach Bar & Restaurant, and the new Poseidon Restaurant where Cordon-Bleu Certified Chef Susan Neff stirs up a mixture of classical European cuisine and local Bahamian fare with fresh herbs from the hotel's own garden.

Each of the 27 guest rooms and suites has its own eclectic charm. Guests have free access to the new freeform swimming pool, lighted tennis courts, volleyball, cabanas, sunfish, boogie boards and snorkeling equipment. Harbour Island also offers the world's best bone-fishing, scuba diving, reef diving, boating, bicycling and swimming.

Harbour Island is accessible by commercial air from Miami and Fort Lauderdale to Nassau. From there, visitors can board Fast Ferries or hop a 30-minute flight to North Eleuthera airport followed by a ten-minute picturesque water taxi ride to Harbour Island. Rooms for the 2000 season range from $145 for a garden view room to $800 for a three bedroom apartment. For reservations, call (800) 468-2799

new e-mail list for Black gays and lesbians

There is a new e-mail list for Black gays and lesbians who are actively giving back to their communities through volunteerism. It is a place for people to come together, share information about tactics, solutions, employment, national service opportunities, and the roles of Black Gays and Lesbians in community activism/service. Please go to onelist.com and register for "blackgay serve."

Employ Us!

A new African American employment web site called http://www.Employus.com has recently come online. The creators are currently looking for professional African Americans to build a resume pool. Employus.com is fully automated and has some nice features. For example, you can have an e-mail sent to you whenever an employer views your resume. Top notch employers specifically looking for African Americans are added to the site daily, so get your resume online now!

Get Out of Debt

Debt Counselors of America has introduced it's new site, www.GetOutOfDebt.org. The site provides educational resources specifically designed to assist Gay and Lesbian consumers. The publications of their 'Gay and Lesbian Financial Series' are available at the site which include 'Managing Your Money: Options for Same Sex Couples'; 'The Living Together Contract'; 'Respecting Your Wishes If You Become Ill or Incapacitated: A Guide for Gay and Lesbian Couples.' You can also order the publications toll free at 1-800-680-3328.

Corrections Photo number 3 in Vol.5 No.2, "In The Mix" incorrectly identified the person in the center as Paris Barclay. The person is actually Menswear Designer Shaka King. In photo number 9 in the same issue, the correct last names are (1) BethAnn Hardison, mother of actor [KahDeem] Hardison.

The Blackstripe, www.blackstripe.com your web address for information and news for and about same-gender-loving, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people of African descent. Features the Blacklist, a listing of notable sgl/lgbt people of African descent, www.blackstripe.com/blacklist.

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GRIOT Circle

African American Gay Seniors have a place to call home in New York City. Gay Reunion in Our Times, GRIOT Circle, serves the needs of black gays over 40 with discussion groups, health fairs and social events. An overwhelming response to a story in the last issue of Venus about Ruth Ellis, a 100 years old black lesbian, reveals the need for organizations like the Griot Circle to become visible nationwide. For a list of gay senior organizations in your area visit www.pridesenior.org. To contact Griot Circle call 212-927-7136 or 718-246-2775.

RESEARCH

Positions available for research project designed to learn about bathhouse culture and HIV infection risk of bathhouse patrons. Salary range. HIV Research Counselor $2246 -$2788 per month; Research analyst I $2754 - $3140 per month. If interested, please contact Mark D. Weber (213) 351-8173 or Trista Bingham (213) 351-8175.

CHAKA KHAN BRENDA RUSSELL headline AMASSI L.A.'s Women In Jazz Benefit

The third annual Women In Jazz benefit concert recently rocked the Wilshire Ebell Theatre, with legendary vocalist Chaka Khan, acclaimed singer-songwriter Brenda Russell, and Brazil's newest jazz sensation, Claudia Villela. Special guests included renowned international tango dancers Jorge and Monica Visconti, who payed tribute to jazz tango master Piazzolla; songstress Brenda Marie Eager ("Ain't Understanding Mellow"); and "the singer's singer." Maxayn. Women In Jazz again puts the spotlight on the AMASSI Center's continued committment to the community. It has been extremely well received. Last year's show, hosted by "Mother Love of Forget & Forgive" attracted substantial media attention and a diverse audience from all of L.A.'s communities. Responses to this year's event promise to make it the most exciting yet. Funds raised benefitted AMASSI Center and the Chaka Khan Foundation.

KNOW YOUR HISTORY

Blacklight Online, a magazine for Black gay men, Lesbains and their friends is now online at http://www.blacklightonline.com. A recent installment of "Past as Prologue," our look at Black Gay history, covers the year 1980 which was a good year for the Gay and Lesbian movement overall. Editor, Sidney Brinkley, writes "One of the prominent Gay leaders at that time was a man named Melvin Boozer. Melvin was Black but he was closely associated with the White Gay liberation movement and, for a time, that put him at odds with many in the Black Gay community." Boozer was the first Black president of the Gay Activists Alliance in D.C. and became the Washington director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF). At the 1980 Democratic National Convention Melvin entered the history books as the first openly Gay man to be nominated for vice-president.

A Souljourn for the New Millennium

Gamma Beta Mu Fraternity presents "A Souljourn for the New Millenniumî to Ghana and Senegal March 18-30, 2000, $2,725.00. Contact Harold Cook at Henderson Travel 800-327-2309, or 301-650-5700. Please reference Tour No. T-712. For additional info about Gamma Beta Mu contact Lee Jenkins at 606-253-4918. Everyone is welcome. Join us for a memorable trip!

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TINA PAUL

"Mother Love' of Forget & Forgive accepts "Nightlife Award" at Life in New York City.

VIRACEPT IS POWERFUL It's tough on HIV. In many people, VIRACEPT lowered the amount of HIV in the blood to levels below the limit of detection of the test used, and substantially increased CD4 cell counts after 24 weeks of triple combination therapy. (The clinical significance of changes in viral RNA levels in blood has not been established. The virus may still be present in other organ systems.) **VIRACEPT IS EASY TO LIVE WITH** Take it three times a day with your normal meals or light snacks. **VIRACEPT IS GENERALLY WELL TOLERATED** People treated with VIRACEPT may experience some side effects; the most common is diarrhea of moderate or greater intensity in 20% of people in clinical trials. **VIRACEPT WORKS** It's indicated for the treatment of HIV infection when anti-HIV drug therapy is warranted. It is not yet known whether taking VIRACEPT will help you live

WHAT YOUR **PROTEASE INHIBITOR** CAN BE:

longer or reduce the number of infections or other illnesses that can occur with HIV. Some common medications and some HIV related medications should not be taken with VIRACEPT. For some people, protease inhibitors have been associated with the onset or worsening of diabetes mellitus and hyperglycemia, and with increased bleeding in patients with hemophilia. Ask your doctor. For more information, call toll free **1-888-VIRACEPT** or visit **www.agouron.com**. (Refer to the important information on the next page.)

VIRACEPT
nelfinavir mesylate

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A Warner-Lambert Company

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POWERFUL AND
EASY TO LIVE WITH.

VIRACEPT®
nelfinavir mesylate

Information for Patients About VIRACEPT® (VI-ra-cept)
Generic Name: nelfinavir (nel-FIN-na-veer) mesylate

For the Treatment of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Infection

Please read this information carefully before taking VIRACEPT. Also, please read this leaflet each time you renew the prescription, just in case anything has changed. This is a summary and not a replacement for a careful discussion with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss VIRACEPT when you start taking this medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when taking VIRACEPT and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

WHAT IS VIRACEPT AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

VIRACEPT is used in the treatment of people with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. Infection with HIV leads to the destruction of CD4 T cells, which are important to the immune system. After a large number of CD4 cells have been destroyed, the infected person develops acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

VIRACEPT works by blocking HIV protease (a protein-cutting enzyme), which is required for HIV to multiply. VIRACEPT has been shown to significantly reduce the amount of HIV in the blood. You should be aware, however, that the effect of VIRACEPT on HIV in the blood has not been correlated with long-term health benefits. Patients who took VIRACEPT also had significant increases in their CD4 cell count.

VIRACEPT is usually taken together with other antiretroviral drugs such as Retrovir® (zidovudine, AZT), Epivir® (lamivudine, 3TC), or Zerit® (stavudine, d4T). Taking VIRACEPT in combination with other antiretroviral drugs reduces the amount of HIV in the body (viral load) and raises CD4 counts.

VIRACEPT may be taken by adults, adolescents, and children 2 years of age or older. Studies in infants younger than 2 years of age are now taking place.

DOES VIRACEPT CURE HIV OR AIDS?

VIRACEPT is not a cure for HIV infection or AIDS. The long-term effects of VIRACEPT are not known at this time. People taking VIRACEPT may still develop opportunistic infections or other conditions associated with HIV infection. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC) infections, and Kaposi's sarcoma.

It is not known whether VIRACEPT will help you live longer or reduce the number of infections or other illnesses that may occur.

There is no proof that VIRACEPT can reduce the risk of transmitting HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

WHO SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT TAKE VIRACEPT?

Together with your doctor, you need to decide whether VIRACEPT is appropriate for you. In making your decision, the following should be considered:

Allergies: If you have had a serious allergic reaction to VIRACEPT, you must not take VIRACEPT. You should also inform your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist of any known allergies to substances such as other medicines, foods, preservatives, or dyes.

If you are pregnant: The effects of VIRACEPT on pregnant women or their unborn babies are not known. If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, you should tell your doctor before taking VIRACEPT.

If you are breast-feeding: You should discuss with your doctor the best way to feed your baby. You should be aware that if your baby does not already have HIV, there is a chance that it can be transmitted through breast-feeding. **Women should not breast-feed if they have HIV.**

Children: VIRACEPT is available for the treatment of children 2 through 13 years of age with HIV. There is a powder form of VIRACEPT that can be mixed with milk, baby formula, or foods like pudding. Instructions on how to take VIRACEPT powder can be found in a later section that discusses how VIRACEPT Oral Powder should be prepared.

If you have liver disease: VIRACEPT has not been studied in people with liver disease. If you have liver disease, you should tell your doctor before taking VIRACEPT.

Other medical problems: Certain medical problems may affect the use of VIRACEPT. Some people taking protease inhibitors have developed new or more serious diabetes or high blood sugar. Some people with hemophilia have had increased bleeding. It is not known whether the protease inhibitors caused these problems. Be sure to tell your doctor if you have hemophilia types A and B, diabetes mellitus, or an increase in thirst and/or frequent urination.

CAN VIRACEPT BE TAKEN WITH OTHER MEDICATIONS?

VIRACEPT may interact with other drugs, including those you take without a prescription. You must discuss with your doctor any drugs that you are taking or are planning to take before you take VIRACEPT.

Drugs you should not take with VIRACEPT:
- Seldane® (terfenadine, for allergies)
- Hismanal® (astemizole, for allergies)
- Propulsid® (cisapride, for heartburn)
- Cordarone® (amiodarone, for irregular heartbeat)
- Quinidine (for irregular heartbeat), also known as Quinaglute®, Cardioquin®, Quinidex®, and others
- Ergot derivatives (Cafergot® and others, for migraine headache)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Versed® (midazolam)

  Taking the above drugs with VIRACEPT may cause serious and/or life-threatening adverse events.
- Rifampin (for tuberculosis), also known as Rimactane®, Rifadin®, Rifater®, or Rifamate®

  This drug reduces blood levels of VIRACEPT.

Dose reduction required if you take VIRACEPT with:
Mycobutin® (rifabutin, for MAC); you will need to take a lower dose of Mycobutin.

A change of therapy should be considered if you are taking VIRACEPT with:
- Phenobarbital
- Phenytoin (Dilantin® and others)
- Carbamazepine (Tegretol® and others)

  These agents may reduce the amount of VIRACEPT in your blood and make it less effective.
- Oral contraceptives ("the pill")

  If you are taking the pill to prevent pregnancy, you should use a different type of contraception since VIRACEPT may reduce the effectiveness of oral contraceptives.

HOW SHOULD VIRACEPT BE TAKEN WITH OTHER ANTI-HIV DRUGS?

Taking VIRACEPT together with other anti-HIV drugs increases their ability to fight the virus. It also reduces the opportunity for resistant viruses to grow. Based on your history of taking other anti-HIV medicine, your doctor will direct you on how to take VIRACEPT and other anti-HIV medicines. These drugs should be taken in a certain order or at specific times. This will depend on how many times a day each medicine should be taken. It will also depend on whether it should be taken with or without food.

Nucleoside analogues: No drug interaction problems were seen when VIRACEPT was given with:
- Retrovir (zidovudine, AZT)
- Epivir (lamivudine, 3TC)
- Zerit (stavudine, d4T)
- Videx® (didanosine, ddI)

If you are taking both Videx (ddI) and VIRACEPT: Videx should be taken without food, on an empty stomach. Therefore, you should take VIRACEPT with food one hour after or more than two hours before you take Videx.

Nonnucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NNRTIs):
When VIRACEPT is taken together with:
- Viramune® (nevirapine)

  The amount of VIRACEPT in your blood may be reduced. Studies are now taking place to learn about the safety of combining VIRACEPT with Viramune.
- Other NNRTIs

  VIRACEPT has not been studied with other NNRTIs.

Other protease inhibitors:
When VIRACEPT is taken together with:
- Crixivan® (indinavir)

  The amount of both drugs in your blood may be increased. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.
- Norvir™ (ritonavir)

  The amount of VIRACEPT in your blood may be increased. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.
- Invirase® (saquinavir)

  The amount of saquinavir in your blood may be increased. If used in combination with saquinavir hard gelatin capsules at 600 mg three times daily, no dose adjustments are needed. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF VIRACEPT?

Like all medicines, VIRACEPT can cause side effects. Most of the side effects experienced with VIRACEPT have been mild to moderate. Diarrhea is the most common side effect in people taking VIRACEPT, and most adult patients had at least mild diarrhea at some point during treatment. In clinical studies, about 20% of patients receiving VIRACEPT 750 mg (three tablets) three times daily had four or more loose stools a day. In most cases, diarrhea can be controlled using antidiarrheal medicines, such as Imodium® A-D (loperamide) and others, which are available without a prescription.

Other side effects that occurred in 2% or more of patients receiving VIRACEPT include abdominal pain, asthenia, nausea, flatulence, and rash.

There were other side effects noted in clinical studies that occurred in less than 2% of patients receiving VIRACEPT. However, these side effects may have been due to other drugs that patients were taking or to the illness itself. Except for diarrhea, there were not many differences in side effects in patients who took VIRACEPT along with other drugs compared with those who took only the other drugs. For a complete list of side effects, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

HOW SHOULD I TAKE VIRACEPT?

VIRACEPT is available only with your doctor's prescription. The light blue VIRACEPT Tablets should be taken three times a day. VIRACEPT should always be taken with a meal or a light snack. You do **not** have to take VIRACEPT exactly every 8 hours. Instead, you can take it at normal times when you are eating.

Take VIRACEPT exactly as directed by your doctor. Do not increase or decrease any dose or the number of doses per day. Also, take this medicine for the exact period of time that your doctor has instructed. **Do not stop taking VIRACEPT without first consulting with your doctor, even if you are feeling better.**

Only take medicine that has been prescribed specifically for you. Do not give VIRACEPT to others or take medicine prescribed for someone else.

The dosing of VIRACEPT may be different for you than for other patients. **Follow the directions from your doctor, exactly as written on the label.** The amount of VIRACEPT in the blood should remain somewhat consistent over time. Missing doses will cause the concentration of VIRACEPT to decrease; therefore, **you should not miss any doses.** However, if you miss a dose, you should take the dose as soon as possible and then take your next scheduled dose and future doses as originally scheduled.

Dosing in adults (including children 14 years of age and older)
The recommended adult dose of VIRACEPT is 750 mg (three tablets) taken three times a day. Each dose should be taken with a meal or light snack.

Dosing in children 2 through 13 years of age
The VIRACEPT dose in children depends on their weight. The recommended dose is 20 to 30 mg/kg (or 9 to 14 mg/pound) per dose, taken three times daily with a meal or light snack. This can be administered either in tablet form or, in children unable to take tablets, as VIRACEPT Oral Powder.

Dose instructions will be provided by the child's doctor. The dose will be given three times daily using the measuring scoop provided, a measuring teaspoon, or one or more tablets depending on the weight and age of the child. The amount of oral powder or tablets to be given to a child is described in the chart below.

Pediatric Dose to Be Administered Three Times Daily

Body Weight Kg	Body Weight Lb	Number of Level Scoops*	Number of Level Teaspoons†	Number of Tablets
7 to < 8.5	15.5 to <18.5	4	1	-
8.5 to <10.5	18.5 to <23	5	1¼	-
10.5 to <12	23 to <26.5	6	1½	-
12 to <14	26.5 to <31	7	1¾	-
14 to <16	31 to <35	8	2	-
16 to <18	35 to <39.5	9	2¼	-
18 to <23	39.5 to <50.5	10	2½	2
≥23	≥50.5	15	3¾	3

In measuring oral powder, the scoop or teaspoon should be level.
* 1 level scoop contains 50 mg of VIRACEPT. Use only the scoop provided with your VIRACEPT bottle.
† 1 level teaspoon contains 200 mg of VIRACEPT. Note: **A measuring teaspoon used for dispensing medication** should be used for measuring VIRACEPT Oral Powder. Ask your pharmacist to make sure you have a medication dispensing teaspoon.

How should VIRACEPT Oral Powder be prepared?

The oral powder may be mixed with a small amount of water, milk, formula, soy formula, soy milk, dietary supplements, or dairy foods such as pudding or ice cream. Once mixed, the entire amount must be taken to obtain the full dose.

Do **not** mix the powder with any acidic food or juice, such as orange or grapefruit juice, apple juice, or apple sauce, because this may create a bitter taste.

Once the powder is mixed, it may be stored at room temperature or refrigerated for up to 6 hours. Do **not** heat the mixed dose once it has been prepared.

Do **not** add water to bottles of oral powder.

VIRACEPT powder is supplied with a scoop for measuring. For help in determining the exact dose of powder for your child, please ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

VIRACEPT Oral Powder contains aspartame, a low-calorie sweetener, and therefore should not be taken by children with phenylketonuria (PKU).

HOW SHOULD VIRACEPT BE STORED?

Keep VIRACEPT and all other medicines out of the reach of children. Keep bottle closed and store at room temperature (between 59°F and 86°F) away from sources of moisture such as a sink or other damp place. Heat and moisture may reduce the effectiveness of VIRACEPT.

Do not keep medicine that is out of date or that you no longer need. Be sure that if you throw any medicine away, it is out of the reach of children.

Discuss all questions about your health with your doctor. If you have questions about VIRACEPT or any other medication you are taking, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist. You can also call 1.888.VIRACEPT (1.888.847.2237) toll free.

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La Jolla, California, 92037, USA

Twenty Questions:

Up Close & Personal with Ricc Rollins and Lorenzo C. Robertson

by: Richard C. Jones

What do you get when you mix business with pleasure? A business that is built on and strengthened by the love of it's two owners, authors Ricc Rollins and Lorenzo C. Robertson. Ricc is the author of *Like Breathing* and Lorenzo C. Robertson is the author of *Detached*. Recently, Venus sat down with the literary duo to talk with them about being partners -- both in life and business.

Venus: After nearly three years of romantic involvement and being entrepreneurs, how has being so intricately linked affected your personal and professional relationships?
Ricc Rollins: I think that it has brought us closer together. It's not bad or good, it just is. We are a team and even if, God forbid, we broke up tomorrow, I know that we would still be great friends.
Lorenzo Robertson: I think that it has actually enhanced and strengthened the bond in everything that we do and are. It's not about him or me, it's about us.

VM: Being business and romantic partners, what are some of the best and worst qualities you two have brought out in one another?
RR: We both have stirred up the creative and adventurous side in each other. We're willing to take risks on projects and having someone that believes in and supports me gives me extra motivation to try if nothing else.
LCR: Ditto.
VM: As authors, has your partnership spilled over into your books?
RR: I think so, there are some moments of our lives that I put in *Like Breathing*, partially because I thought it worked but to also because it chronicled the relationship that I have with Lorenzo.

continued on page 42

Will the Circle be Unbroken?

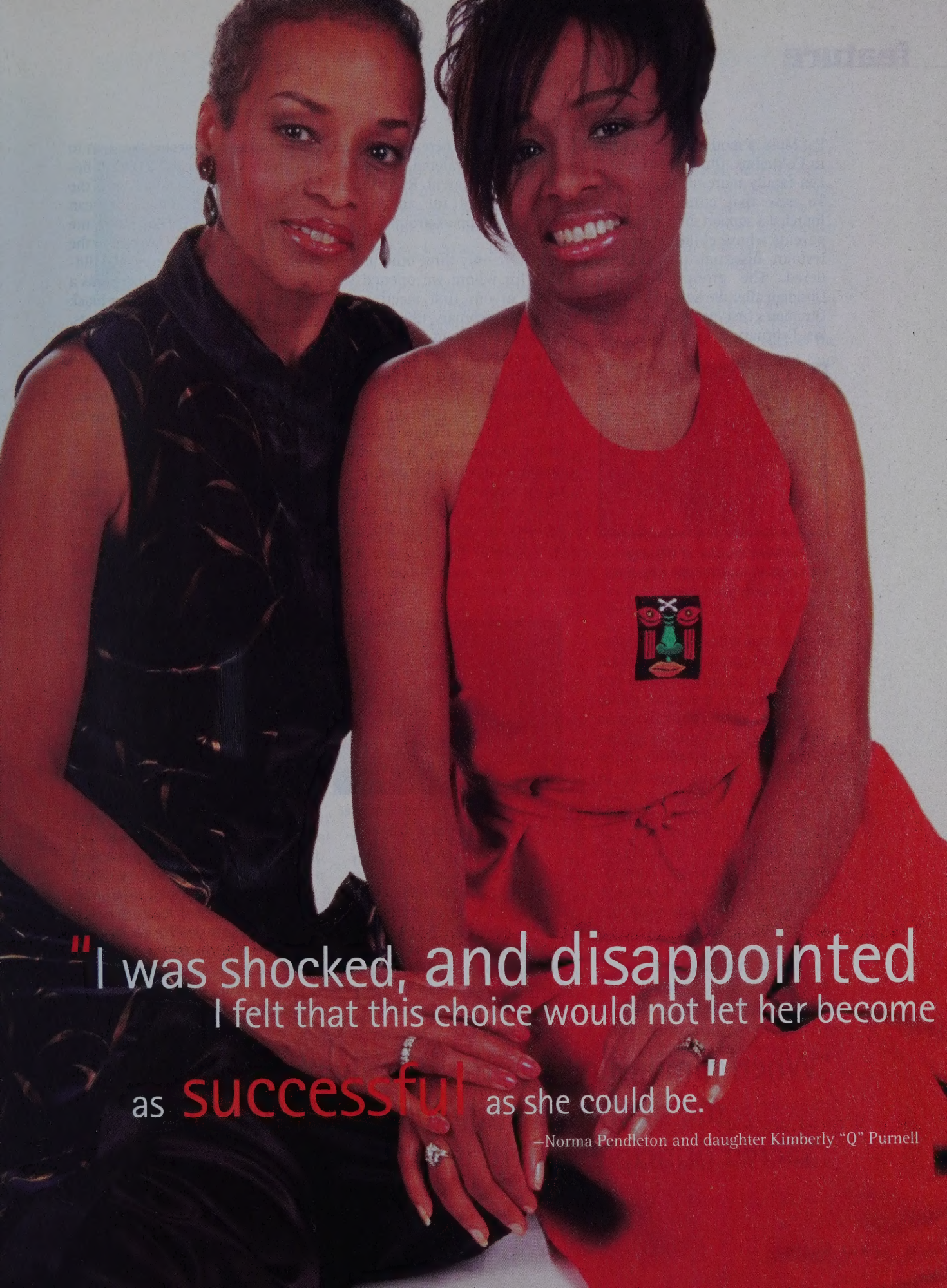
What Black Parents Really Think:

When They Find Out That Their Child is Gay

BY PHILL W. PETRIE

The family unit is the most profound one tying human beings together. It plays a primordial role in our development and stays with us long after we've left the family's nest. With such deep ties, there is inevitable loss when families fall apart. Within the defiant cries of: **"It's my life and I'm going to live it my way;"** or, **"If you can't live by my rules . . ."** there is loss.

Disguised as platitudes (or attitudes), loss is often the result of a son's or daughter's leap from a clandestine life into self realization. The irony is that the black gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered (BGLBT) ascent to clarity is sometimes a parent's descent into guilt [**"Where did I go wrong?**], denial [**"But she was Miss Central High"],** or fear **["I'm on the deacon board, what will they say?"**]. Social censure can be painful and there is shame. What does a parent say when Jane or Junior announces 'I'm lesbian' or 'I'm gay?' If that time comes, will the circle be unbroken?



"I was shocked, and disappointed I felt that this choice would not let her become as successful as she could be."

–Norma Pendleton and daughter Kimberly "Q" Purnell

Pat Moss, a mother and counselor in Columbus, Ohio, views a broken family more often than not. To ease that condition, Moss founded a support group for black parents whose children are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered. The group is named Obsidian after the hard black rock. Obsidian's first meeting took place last February in Columbus.

Pat Moss founder of Obsidian
a support group for Black Parents
with gay children

A thousand miles east, in suburban Washington, D. C., William Beale was helping to birth For Those We Love, a support group with the same objectives as Obsidian. The two groups are the only known organizations in the country appealing directly to black parents with gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered children. Both Obsidian and For Those We Love had their beginnings with PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians And Gays), a primarily white organization.

"I attended meetings at PFLAG," Beale said, "after my son died of AIDS. Often I was the only black person there. 'Where are the other parents?' I wondered. Every gay person has a parent. Right then, I felt the need for an African American support group."

"We have only three other members for whom we opened the doors at our first meeting for PFLAG in February 1999," the 51-year-old Moss said. "The meeting was preceded by a BGLBT film festival. We tried to gather the community together to give it another resource. Although I am a part of PFLAG, I knew Obsidian had to be apart from it. PFLAG is unable to attract black parents directly because black parents perceive a white organization as yet another layer of problems they have to go through."

William Beale, (r),with his daughter
and late son Dwayne S. Brown.

That's what Jacqueline Davison felt when she attended her first PFLAG meeting. "When Michael told me he was gay, he was fourteen. I knew I needed a support group because I was very upset about it. He brought me literature to read and suggested that I go to Parents of Gays [which later became PFLAG]. I walked into the meeting and was the only African American there. That made me very uncomfortable. I spoke to the facilitator after the meeting. I didn't go back. I realized there was a need for a support group for black parents directed by black parents. Thats how I became one of the original organizers of For Those We Love, along with William Beale and Charles Gervin. Members of PFLAG helped us to organize and still help us."

Moss came right to the point when she said, "Remember, we are talking about our children here." We are also talking about homophobic parents. Moss confirmed that many parents contacting Obsidian have not accepted their children's sexual preferences because of their own convictions. George Purnell walked away from his daughter Kimberly when through errant letters he discovered that she was a lesbian. He didn't speak to her for a year.

"My father loved me to the core," Kimberly Purnell, an award-winning (Audelco) actress, told Venus, "but he was really hurt when he found out and didn't know how to handle it. He reached me at my job and called me out; told me he didn't want to have anything to do with me. We didn't speak for more than a year. Then one day the phone rang and he was on the line; said he wanted me to meet a friend of his, someone who was 'funny' like me. That was his way of apologizing."

"When families allow other family members to die neglected and alone while they stand on 'sacred principles,' there is trouble with the angles."

Detroit's Johnny Jenkins and his mother Ida Jenkins

Distance--sometimes banishment-- is one way parents skirt the central issue--the homosexuality of their children. Kimberly's mother, Norma Pendleton, responded to Kimberly's "coming out" with the unconditional love any daughter would want. Kimberly, however, didn't know what her mother would do and hedged her bet in the telling. She telephoned "mom" from college to reveal her lesbianism, then followed it up with a letter.

"I was shocked," Pendleton told us. "Disappointed. I felt that this choice would not let her become as successful as she could be. I think that even now."

Kimberly remembers her mother saying that she "knew it" and that Kimberly "would grow out of it." Several other of the people we interviewed remembered the initial revelation differently. John Jenkins, a Detroit gay activist, remembers telling his mother ["I simply couldn't tell my father," Jenkins said. "He was so macho."] while driving home that he was gay. Mother Ida Jenkins recalls her son saying that he was "bisexual."

"He was an adult when he told me and I don't know what made him decide to tell me at that point," Mrs. Jenkins said. "We'd gone out and he went into a store. Something happened in there that caused him to ask if I loved him unconditionally. I said yes and meant it. He then told me he was bisexual. I smiled because I had seen no indication of "Bi." He did confirm something I already thought "

Many other parents thought that their child might be gay, but could not bring themselves to saying it. Mrs. Davison, who is the mother of a gay son and a lesbian daughter, said she knew that her son was different even before he was a teenager.

"I cannot tell you what it was about Michael that led me to think that he was gay," Mrs. Davison said. "We took him to therapy when he was seven or eight. Why? He was too much of a loner. therapist said Michael was doing fine and then suggested that we [Davison and her husband] should focus on our own problems."

Only three persons told us of teen and pre-teen homosexual and lesbian experiences. Only one revealed this to his parent while still a teen. More important, when told by their adult children, neither mother asked the question: "How long has this been going on?" In spite of unconditional love, the black parents we interviewed took the attitude: 'don't ask, don't tell.' Dwayne S. Brown did tell. When only 16, he told his parents of his gayness. Fifteen years later, at 31, he died of AIDS.

"He just told us he was gay," said William Beale, his father and the father of For Those We Love. "We suspected it, but I wasn't quite sure. He was dating girls," Beale explained. "So I went out and got a girl I knew to have sex with him. I wanted to find out if he were gay or not. He could have been bisexual. I wanted to make sure."

"All of our gay black children have parents and we all have the same problems," Beale continued. "Thats why we organized For Those We Love. We meet at Sisterspace Bookstore [in Washington, D. C.] every fourth Thursday."

"For Those We Love core group consists of four to five persons." Beale explained that at each of the three meetings they've had four or five different persons. As with Obsidian, most attendees are mothers. All of the mothers Venus interviewed were divorced. All confirmed that their divorces had nothing to do with the sexuality of their children.

Parents attend support groups because they get comfort from knowing that they are not alone as they meet other families with their concerns; they talk about issues; they seek information. "They come to us because they can't discuss their feelings with other family members," Beale said.

"Obsidian just has to be piecemeal," Moss believes. "I took care of a young man who was in a hospice with AIDS and there was still a struggle with his family until the end. So many families are slow to move and take a stand on AIDS." Obsidians mission is to offer a support for BGLBT parents. When families allow other family members to die neglected and alone while they stand on "sacred principles," there is trouble with the angles. If we can't get families to pull together in death, the prospect for doing it otherwise is dim. For Those We Love and Obsidian are resources of support helping to make things brighter in our communities.

"We are not here to change anyone's religion," Moss said. "I don't want to take away anybody's faith. I'm here to ease you into ac-

Left
Comedienne, Karen Williams and her mother Mrs. Helen Young

Below
Human Rights Activist George Bellinger and his parents Mr. and Mrs. Belonged

cepting your child's orientation. I am not trying to change anyone overnight. Our best response has been from ladies who come to my house--I say ladies because we haven't had any men. Many ladies call, but they don't come. We still have a long row to hoe.

Helen Young and Karen Williams

Helen on Her Daughter's Coming Out: "Support and love your children. Some people think it is a sexual or freakish thing. It is not like that. They need love. I don't think mothering stops when the child is an adult. I can't imagine not speaking to my children"

Karen on Coming Out: "I came out when I was young, and that allowed my parents to see that it wasn't a phase. They've had a long time to deal with it. My father didn't like it because he was concerned how my son would respond. Perhaps he related my crossing sexual lines to his crossing racial lines."

Ida Jenkins and Johnny Jenkins

Ida on the Nature of Gayness: "I raised my son to be a free thinker and to think for himself. This is your decision; this is your life, I told him. Of course, the values he has come from me and the life I've led. But I feel he made a choice. Yes, I think it is a matter of choice."

Johnny on the Nature of Gayness: "I've always had an attraction for boys--even in grade school. I lost my virginity at 12 or 13. I remember playing around with guys doing oral sex in sixth grade. I dated women, but guys thrilled me more. My preference is for men.

Lucia Belonged and George Bellinger

Lucy on Respecting Difference: "George was never into athletics like the other boys were. He would shoot basketball and play street games, but was never gung ho' about it. I didn't care. Whatever your life is, thats what it is. George Jr. is George Jr. and we don't make a fuss about anything concerning him."

George on Respecting Others: "I wouldn't do things that would embarrass my parents. I won't put them in a place where I feel they would have to defend my actions. Whatever I've done, I've had to own up to it."

Jacqueline Davison

Jacqueline on Accepting her children's choices: "Early on, I was reluctant to tell my friends. Parents of gay children must go through an educational process about their children's choices--find out more about it. At first, I felt there was something that we did or did not do. Its a slow process grappling and dealing with your child's choice. It takes a long time."

For more information on support groups for Black parents of gay children contact:

For Those We Love
P. O. Box 60813 Washington, D. C. 20039 Tel *(301) 445-6149*
or PO Box 34792
Washington, D. C, 20043
Tel *(202) 638-3852*
Obsidian Tel *(614) 463-1183*

Our Son is Gay

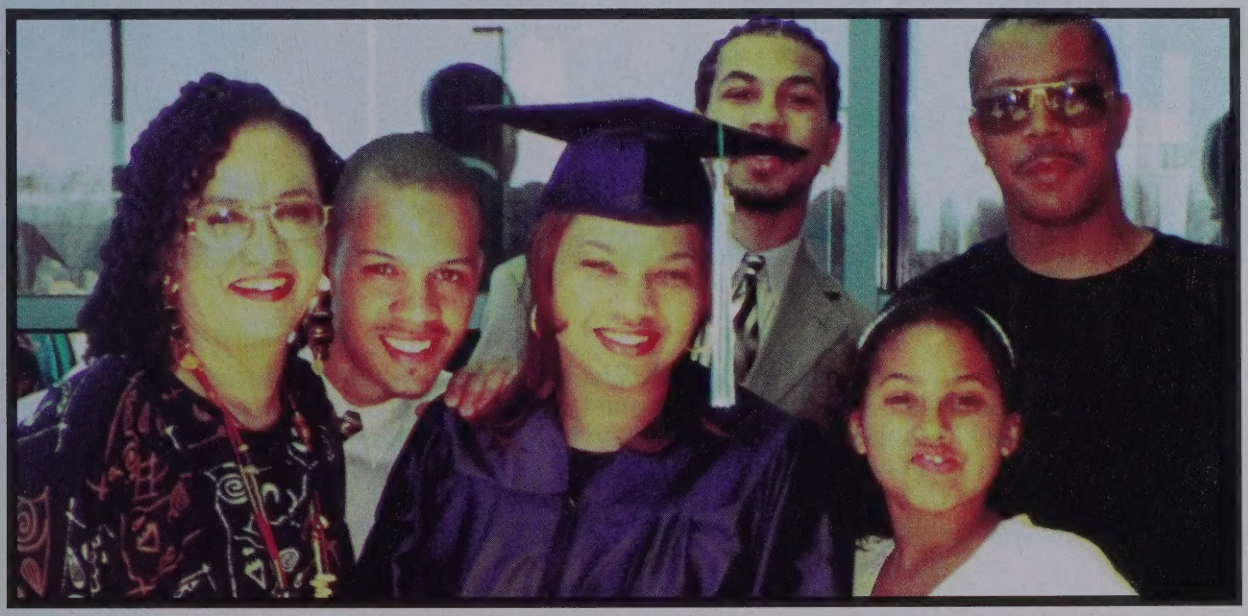
by Marcella Welch

" 'Rieko called to tell us he's gay!' I then fell on the floor in a fitful crying jag. My husband, with a dazed look on his face, tried to comfort me the best he could."

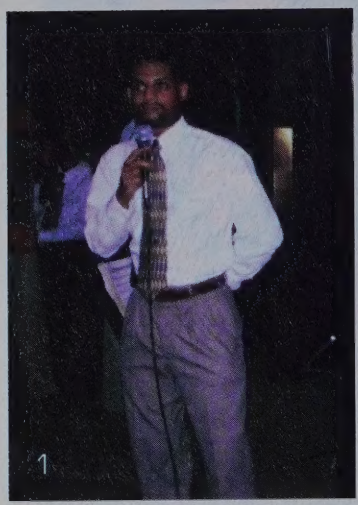
Deep down inside I always knew my son, LaRieko, was gay. I just didn't want to admit it. When he was very young he played with dolls with his little sister. His two older brothers teased him because he didn't play rough games. Once when he was about five years old, I spoke to a psychologist about my suspicions but she told me it was probably a passing phase. I think he threw us little hints but we ignored them. While in high school he grew his hair long in the front and dyed it blonde. We just thought he was going through another phase. All of his friends were girls. As a matter of fact he went to the prom with several girls. He also went through a phase where it seems he was very angry with both his dad and me. We would say something to him and he would go to his room and slam the door behind him. I believe now he wanted to tell us he was gay but was apprehensive. I think Rieko was at college for about one year when I got "The Phone Call." He was crying and telling me about this guy he was seeing who cheated on him. I just sat there for a long time stunned. At first I could not really understand what he was talking about, but it finally sunk in. All of a sudden he said, "Mom, I'm gay!" I knew I had to be strong because he seemed to be extremely upset so I kept telling him I loved him and everything would be all right. More than once during the conversation I remember telling him no matter what, we would always love him.

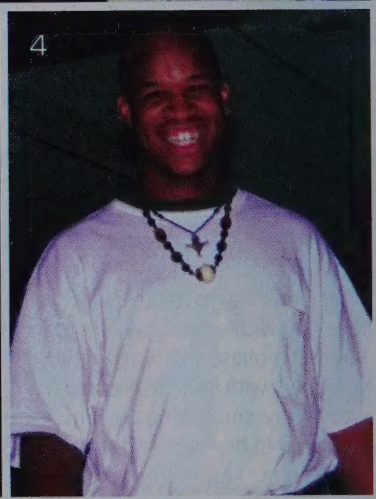
After our conversation by husband asked why LaRieko had called. He was in another room and I said, "LaRieko says he's gay." My husband, who couldn't hear me very well said, "What did you say?" I yelled even louder, "Rieko called to tell us he's gay!" I then fell on the floor in a fitful crying jag. My husband, with a dazed look on his face, tried to comfort me the best he could. Whenever I think about that night my son came out it seems almost comical the way I told my husband. I wish now I could have done it in a different way.

That was over six years ago. Since that eventful day we have met some of Rieko's friends both gay and straight. He has been in one long term relationship but that has ended. Not all the family knows that Rieko is gay. One by one they are finding out. Little by little my husband and I are coming out to our close friends. Some of them we don't tell because we know they are homophobic. We know that their whole focus will be on Rieko's homosexuality. They will forget that he is handsome, intelligent, witty and most of all he was once our baby boy.



Front row l-r , Marcella Welch (Mom), LaRieko, LaShawna (LaRiekois sister), DaMonica (our granddaughter). Back Row l-r, Brian (LaShawnda's boyfriend), and Curtis (Dad).



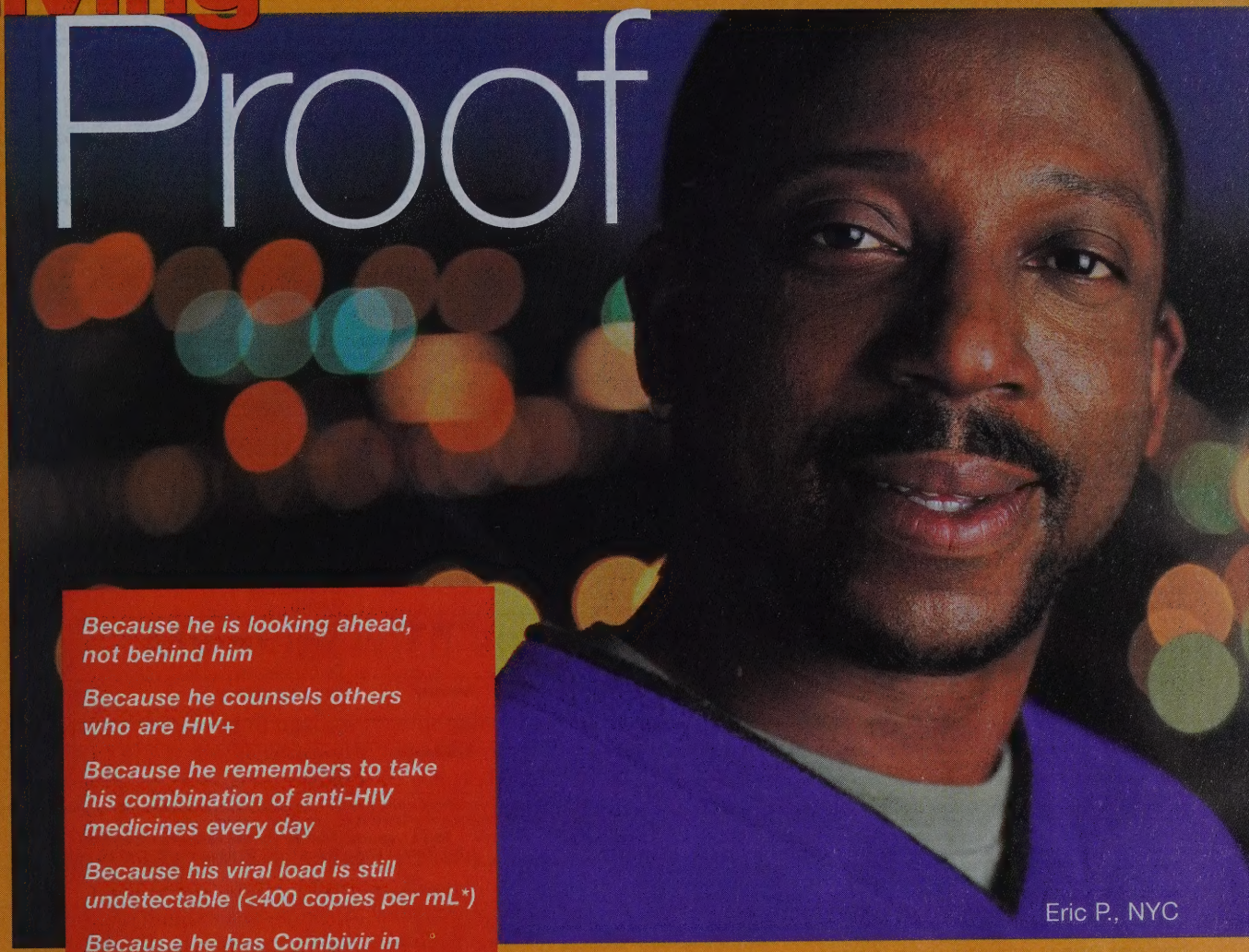


BLACKOUT '99

The city of Cleveland was host BlackOut '99 Weekend. **1.** Co-Chair of BlackOut Productions Derrick **2.** Author/publisher Ricc Rollins, Charlene Cothran of Venus Magazine, and Larry Webb-Co-Chair of BlackOut Productions **3.** Event organizers pose with keynote speaker Dr. Marjorie Hill, (c), of NYC **4.** Larry Webb's other half **5.** Comedienne, rocked the house at the opening ceremonies **6.** Members of Detroit's Billionaire's Boy Club was on hand **7.** Derrick gives closing remarks following an evening of jazz.

PROVEN POWER FOR HIV

Living Proof



Because he is looking ahead, not behind him

Because he counsels others who are HIV+

Because he remembers to take his combination of anti-HIV medicines every day

Because his viral load is still undetectable (<400 copies per mL)*

Because he has Combivir in his combination therapy— proven to help people with HIV live longer, healthier lives[1,2]

Ask your doctor about

Combivir®

lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg

Smarter Together

ONE TABLET TWICE A DAY

2 powerful anti-HIV medicines in one tablet, taken twice a day with or without food

SAFETY INFORMATION

- Make sure to see your doctor regularly because serious side effects can occur, such as muscle damage and a decrease in red and white blood cells
- Rarely, a buildup of acid in the blood and an enlarged liver, including fatal cases, have been seen
- The most frequent side effects are headache, upset stomach, malaise or fatigue, and runny nose

CALL 1-800-760-5912 for information or visit our Web site at www.treathiv.com

Glaxo Wellcome HIV
A division of Glaxo Wellcome Inc.
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
Web site: www.glaxowellcome.com

Please see brief summary for Combivir on the following page.

* Roche Amplicor HIV-1 MONITOR® Test

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BRIEF SUMMARY

COMBIVIR® Tablets (lamivudine/zidovudine tablets)

The following is a brief summary only; see full prescribing information for complete product information.

WARNING: ZIDOVUDINE, ONE OF THE TWO ACTIVE INGREDIENTS IN COMBIVIR, HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH HEMATOLOGIC TOXICITY INCLUDING NEUTROPENIA AND SEVERE ANEMIA, PARTICULARLY IN PATIENTS WITH ADVANCED HIV DISEASE (SEE WARNINGS). PROLONGED USE OF ZIDOVUDINE HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH SYMPTOMATIC MYOPATHY.

LACTIC ACIDOSIS AND SEVERE HEPATOMEGALY WITH STEATOSIS, INCLUDING FATAL CASES, HAVE BEEN REPORTED WITH THE USE OF NUCLEOSIDE ANALOGUES ALONE OR IN COMBINATION, INCLUDING LAMIVUDINE, ZIDOVUDINE, AND OTHER ANTIRETROVIRALS (SEE WARNINGS).

INDICATIONS AND USAGE: COMBIVIR is indicated for the treatment of HIV infection.

Description of Clinical Studies: ***COMBIVIR:*** There have been no clinical trials conducted with COMBIVIR. See CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY for information about bioequivalence. One COMBIVIR Tablet given twice a day is an alternative regimen to EPIVIR Tablets 150 mg twice a day plus RETROVIR 600 mg per day in divided doses.

Lamivudine Plus Zidovudine: The NUCB3007 (CAESAR) study was conducted using EPIVIR 150-mg Tablets (150 mg b.i.d.) and RETROVIR 100-mg Capsules (2 x 100 mg t.i.d.). CAESAR was a multicenter, double-blind, placebo-controlled study comparing continued current therapy [zidovudine alone (62% of patients) or zidovudine with didanosine or zalcitabine (38% of patients)] to the addition of EPIVIR or EPIVIR plus an investigational non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor, randomized 1:2:1. A total of 1816 HIV-infected adults with 25 to 250 (median 122) CD4 cells/mm³ at baseline were enrolled: median age was 36 years, 87% were male, 84% were nucleoside-experienced, and 16% were therapy-naive. The median duration on study was 12 months. Results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of Patients (%) With At Least One HIV Disease-Progression Event or Death

Endpoint	Current Therapy (n = 460)	EPIVIR plus Current Therapy (n = 896)	EPIVIR plus a NNRTI* plus Current Therapy (n = 460)
HIV progression or death	90 (19.6%)	86 (9.6%)	41 (8.9%)
Death	27 (5.9%)	23 (2.6%)	14 (3.0%)

*An investigational non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor not approved in the United States.

CONTRAINDICATIONS: COMBIVIR Tablets are contraindicated in patients with previously demonstrated clinically significant hypersensitivity to any of the components of the product.

WARNINGS: COMBIVIR is a fixed-dose combination of lamivudine and zidovudine. Ordinarily, COMBIVIR should not be administered concomitantly with either lamivudine or zidovudine.

The complete prescribing information for all agents being considered for use with COMBIVIR should be consulted before combination therapy with COMBIVIR is initiated.

Bone Marrow Suppression: COMBIVIR should be used with caution in patients who have bone marrow compromise evidenced by granulocyte count <1000 cells/mm³ or hemoglobin <9.5 g/dL (see ADVERSE REACTIONS).

Frequent blood counts are strongly recommended in patients with advanced HIV disease who are treated with COMBIVIR. For HIV-infected individuals and patients with asymptomatic or early HIV disease, periodic blood counts are recommended.

Lactic Acidosis/Severe Hepatomegaly with Steatosis: Lactic acidosis and severe hepatomegaly with steatosis, including fatal cases, have been reported with the use of nucleoside analogues alone or in combination, including lamivudine, zidovudine, and other antiretrovirals. A majority of these cases have been in women. Obesity and prolonged nucleoside exposure may be risk factors. Particular caution should be exercised when administering COMBIVIR to any patient with known risk factors for liver disease; however, cases have also been reported in patients with no known risk factors. Treatment with COMBIVIR should be suspended in any patient who develops clinical or laboratory findings suggestive of lactic acidosis or pronounced hepatotoxicity (which may include hepatomegaly and steatosis even in the absence of marked transaminase elevations).

Myopathy: Myopathy and myositis, with pathological changes similar to that produced by HIV disease, have been associated with prolonged use of zidovudine, and therefore may occur with therapy with COMBIVIR.

PRECAUTIONS:

General: Reduction of doses of lamivudine is recommended for patients with low body weight (less than 50 kg or 110 lb); therefore patients with low body weight should not receive COMBIVIR.

Patients With HIV and Hepatitis B Virus Coinfection: In clinical trials and postmarketing experience, some patients with HIV infection who have chronic liver disease due to hepatitis B virus infection experienced clinical or laboratory evidence of recurrent hepatitis upon discontinuation of lamivudine. Consequences may be more severe in patients with decompensated liver disease.

Patients With Impaired Renal Function: Reduction of the dosages of lamivudine and zidovudine is recommended for patients with impaired renal function. Patients with creatinine clearance ≤50 mL/min should not receive COMBIVIR.

Information for Patients: COMBIVIR is not a cure for HIV infection and patients may continue to experience illnesses associated with HIV infection, including opportunistic infections. Patients should be advised that the use of COMBIVIR has not been shown to reduce the risk of transmission of HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination. Patients should be informed that the major toxicities of COMBIVIR are neutropenia and/or anemia. They should be told of the extreme importance of having their blood counts followed closely while on therapy, especially for patients with advanced HIV disease. Patients should be advised of the importance of taking COMBIVIR as it is prescribed.

Drug Interactions: Coadministration of ganciclovir, interferon-alpha, and other bone marrow suppressive or cytotoxic agents may increase the hematologic toxicity of zidovudine (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY section of full prescribing information).

Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, and Impairment of Fertility: ***Carcinogenicity:***

Lamivudine: Lamivudine long-term carcinogenicity studies in mice and rats showed no evidence of carcinogenic potential at exposures up to 10 times (mice) and 58 times (rats) those observed in humans at the recommended therapeutic dose.

Zidovudine: Zidovudine was administered orally at three dosage levels to separate groups of mice and rats (60 females and 60 males in each group). Initial single daily doses were 30, 60, and 120 mg/kg per day in mice and 80, 220, and 600 mg/kg per day in rats. The doses in mice were reduced to 20, 30, and 40 mg/kg per day after day 90 because of treatment-related anemia, whereas in rats only the high dose was reduced to 450 mg/kg per day on day 91 and then to 300 mg/kg per day on day 279.

In mice, seven late-appearing (after 19 months) vaginal neoplasms (five nonmetastasizing squamous cell carcinomas, one squamous cell papilloma, and one squamous polyp) occurred in animals given the highest dose. One late-appearing squamous cell papilloma occurred in the vagina of a middle-dose animal. No vaginal tumors were found at the lowest dose.

In rats, two late-appearing (after 20 months), nonmetastasizing vaginal squamous cell carcinomas occurred in animals given the highest dose. No vaginal tumors occurred at the low or middle dose in rats. No other drug-related tumors were observed in either sex of either species.

At doses that produced tumors in mice and rats, the estimated drug exposure (as measured by AUC) was approximately three times (mouse) and 24 times (rat) the estimated human exposure at the recommended therapeutic dose of 100 mg every 4 hours.

Two transplacental carcinogenicity studies were conducted in mice. One study administered zidovudine at doses of 20 mg/kg per day or 40 mg/kg per day from gestation day 10 through parturition and lactation with dosing continuing in offspring for 24 months postnatally. The doses of zidovudine employed in this study produced zidovudine exposures approximately three times the estimated human exposure at recommended doses. After 24 months, at the highest dose, an increase in incidence of vaginal tumors was noted with no increase in tumors in the liver or lung or any other organ in either gender. These findings are consistent with results of the standard oral carcinogenicity study in mice, as described earlier. A second study administered zidovudine at maximum tolerated doses of 12.5 mg/day or 25 mg/day (~1000 mg/kg nonpregnant body weight or ~450 mg/kg of term body weight) to pregnant mice from days 12 through 18 of gestation. There was an increase in the number of tumors in the lung, liver, and female reproductive tracts in the offspring of mice receiving the higher dose level of zidovudine.

It is not known how predictive the results of rodent carcinogenicity studies may be for humans.

Mutagenicity: Lamivudine: Lamivudine was negative in a microbial mutagenicity screen, in an in vitro cell transformation assay, in a rat micronucleus test, in a rat bone marrow cytogenetic assay, and in an assay for unscheduled DNA synthesis in rat liver. It was mutagenic in a L5178Y/TK$^{+/-}$ mouse lymphoma assay and clastogenic in a cytogenetic assay using cultured human lymphocytes.

Zidovudine: Zidovudine was mutagenic in a L5178Y/TK$^{+/-}$ mouse lymphoma assay, positive in an in vitro cell transformation assay, clastogenic in a cytogenetic assay using cultured human lymphocytes, and positive in mouse and rat micronucleus tests after repeated doses. It was negative in a cytogenetic study in rats given a single dose.

Impairment of Fertility: Lamivudine: In a study of reproductive performance, lamivudine, administered to male and female rats at doses up to 130 times the usual adult dose based on body surface area considerations, revealed no evidence of impaired fertility (judged by conception rates) and no effect on the survival, growth, and development to weaning of the offspring.

Zidovudine: Zidovudine, administered to male and female rats at doses up to 7 times the usual adult dose based on body surface area considerations, had no effect on fertility judged by conception rates.

Pregnancy: Pregnancy Category C.

COMBIVIR® Tablets (lamivudine/zidovudine tablets): There are no adequate and well-controlled studies of COMBIVIR in pregnant women. Reproduction studies with lamivudine and zidovudine have been performed in animals (see Lamivudine and Zidovudine sections below). COMBIVIR should be used during pregnancy only if the potential benefits outweigh the risks.

Lamivudine: Reproduction studies with orally administered lamivudine have been performed in rats and rabbits at 130 and 60 times, respectively, the usual adult dose (based on relative body surface area) and have revealed no evidence of teratogenicity. Some evidence of early embryolethality was seen in the rabbit at doses similar to those produced by the usual adult dose and higher, but there was no indication of this effect in the rat at orally administered doses up to 130 times the usual adult dose. Studies in pregnant rats and rabbits showed that lamivudine is transferred to the fetus through the placenta.

Zidovudine: Reproduction studies with orally administered zidovudine in the rat and in the rabbit at doses up to 500 mg/kg per day revealed no evidence of teratogenicity with zidovudine. Zidovudine treatment resulted in embryo/fetal toxicity as evidenced by an increase in the incidence of fetal resorptions in rats given 150 or 450 mg/kg per day and rabbits given 500 mg/kg per day. The doses used in the teratology studies resulted in peak zidovudine plasma concentrations (after one-half of the daily dose) in rats 66 to 226 times, and in rabbits 12 to 87 times, mean steady-state peak human plasma concentrations (after one-sixth of the daily dose) achieved with the recommended daily dose (100 mg every 4 hours). In an additional teratology study in rats, a dose of 3000 mg/kg per day (very near the oral median lethal dose in rats of 3683 mg/kg) caused marked maternal toxicity and an increase in the incidence of fetal malformations. This dose resulted in peak zidovudine plasma concentrations 350 times peak human plasma concentrations. No evidence of teratogenicity was seen in this experiment at doses of 600 mg/kg per day or less. Two rodent carcinogenicity studies were conducted (see Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility).

Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry: To monitor maternal-fetal outcomes of pregnant women exposed to COMBIVIR and other antiretroviral agents, an Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry has been established. Physicians are encouraged to register patients by calling 1-800-258-4263.

Nursing Mothers: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that HIV-infected mothers not breastfeed their infants to avoid risking postnatal transmission of HIV infection.

COMBIVIR: Zidovudine is excreted in breast milk (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY: Pharmacokinetics: Nursing Mothers subsection of full prescribing information); however, no data are available on COMBIVIR or lamivudine. Therefore, there is a potential for adverse effects in nursing infants. **Mothers should be instructed not to breastfeed if they are receiving COMBIVIR.**

Pediatric Use: COMBIVIR should not be administered to pediatric patients less than 12 years of age because it is a fixed-dose combination that cannot be adjusted for this patient population.

ADVERSE REACTIONS:

Lamivudine Plus Zidovudine Administered As Separate Formulations: In four randomized, controlled trials of EPIVIR 300 mg per day plus RETROVIR 600 mg per day, the following selected clinical and laboratory adverse events were observed (see Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2: Selected Clinical Adverse Events (≥5% Frequency) in Four Controlled Clinical Trials With EPIVIR 300 mg/day and RETROVIR 600 mg/day

Adverse Event		EPIVIR plus RETROVIR (n = 251)
Body as a whole	Headache	35%
	Malaise & fatigue	27%
	Fever or chills	10%
Digestive	Nausea	33%
	Diarrhea	18%
	Nausea & vomiting	13%
	Anorexia and/or decreased appetite	10%
	Abdominal pain	9%
	Abdominal cramps	6%
	Dyspepsia	5%
Nervous system	Neuropathy	12%
	Insomnia & other sleep disorders	11%
	Dizziness	10%
	Depressive disorders	9%
Respiratory	Nasal signs & symptoms	20%
	Cough	18%
Skin	Skin rashes	9%
Musculoskeletal	Musculoskeletal pain	12%
	Myalgia	8%
	Arthralgia	5%

Pancreatitis was observed in three of the 656 adult patients (<0.5%) who received EPIVIR in controlled clinical trials. Selected laboratory abnormalities observed during therapy are listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Frequencies of Selected Laboratory Abnormalities Among Adults in Four Controlled Clinical Trials of EPIVIR 300 mg/day plus RETROVIR 600 mg/day*

Test (Abnormal Level)	EPIVIR plus RETROVIR % (n)
Neutropenia (ANC<750/mm³)	7.2% (237)
Anemia (Hgb<8.0 g/dL)	2.9% (241)
Thrombocytopenia (platelets<50,000/mm³)	0.4% (240)
ALT (>5.0 x ULN)	3.7% (241)
AST (>5.0 x ULN)	1.7% (241)
Bilirubin (>2.5 x ULN)	0.8% (241)
Amylase (>2.0 x ULN)	4.2% (72)

ULN = Upper limit of normal.
ANC = Absolute neutrophil count.
n = Number of patients assessed.
*Frequencies of these laboratory abnormalities were higher in patients with mild laboratory abnormalities at baseline.

Observed During Clinical Practice: In addition to adverse events reported from clinical trials, the following events have been identified during post-approval use of EPIVIR and/or RETROVIR. Because they are reported voluntarily from a population of unknown size, estimates of frequency cannot be made. These events have been chosen for inclusion due to a combination of their seriousness, frequency of reporting, or potential causal connection to EPIVIR and/or RETROVIR.

Endocrine and Metabolic: Hyperglycemia.
General: Sensitization reactions (including anaphylaxis), vasculitis.
Hepatobiliary Tract and Pancreas: Lactic acidosis and hepatic steatosis (see WARNINGS), pancreatitis.
Musculoskeletal: Muscle weakness, CPK elevation, rhabdomyolysis.
Nervous: Seizures.
Skin: Alopecia, erythema multiforme, Stevens-Johnson syndrome, urticaria.

OVERDOSAGE:

COMBIVIR: There is no known antidote for COMBIVIR.

Lamivudine: One case of an adult ingesting 6 grams of lamivudine was reported; there were no clinical signs or symptoms noted and hematologic tests remained normal. It is not known whether lamivudine can be removed by peritoneal dialysis or hemodialysis.

Zidovudine: Acute overdoses of zidovudine have been reported in pediatric patients and adults. These involved exposures up to 50 grams. The only consistent findings were nausea and vomiting. Other reported occurrences included headache, dizziness, drowsiness, lethargy, confusion, and one report of a grand mal seizure. Hematologic changes were transient. All patients recovered. Hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis appear to have a negligible effect on the removal of zidovudine while elimination of its primary metabolite, GZDV, is enhanced.

DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION: The recommended oral dose of COMBIVIR for adults and adolescents (at least 12 years of age) is one tablet (containing 150 mg of lamivudine and 300 mg of zidovudine) twice daily.

Dose Adjustment: Because it is a fixed-dose combination, COMBIVIR should not be prescribed for patients requiring dosage adjustment such as those with reduced renal function (creatinine clearance ≤50 mL/min), those with low body weight (<50 kg or 110 lb), or those experiencing dose-limiting adverse events.

US Patent Nos. 5,047,407; 4,818,538; 4,828,838; 4,724,232; 4,833,130; and 4,837,208

GlaxoWellcome

Glaxo Wellcome Inc.
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

Lamivudine is manufactured under agreement from BioChem Pharma Inc.
Laval, Quebec, Canada

March 1999/RL-685

References: 1. CAESAR Coordinating Committee. Randomised trial of addition of lamivudine or lamivudine plus loviride to zidovudine-containing regimens for patients with HIV-1 infection: the CAESAR trial. *Lancet.* 1997;349:1413-1421. **2.** Hammer SM, Squires KE, Hughes MD, et al. A controlled trial of two nucleoside analogues plus indinavir in persons with human immunodeficiency virus infection and CD4 cell counts of 200 per cubic millimeter or less. *N Engl J Med.* 1997;337:725-733.

Out in the Bahamas

by Tina Johnson

"By telling them in person,

I wanted to show them that I was still me--
that I hadn't turned into pure evil while they weren't looking.

My mom cried and prayed over me and held me."

Imagine childhood in paradise. Your life is simple. You are young, an over achiever and your parents love you. Our lives were such - but far from idyllic and carefree. We were young girls- my cousin and I. Every Sunday, our families had dinner together after Sunday services. When dinner and the dishes were done, we would cruise the streets (actually walk up an' down the road) looking for someone or something to hold our interest. With nothing to do on a calm Sunday afternoon but roam, our conversation would run the gamut.

Talk would be of our crazy parents, how silly school was and finally our sexuality. My cousin would talk of how different she was and how her parents did not understand her. What could I do but concur? She Was right. We were different. Sheltered and exposed to only the purported good that is found in - the home, academia and the church - our lives were very limited in social challenge. Fortunately, we are very well read. Both of us realized that our parents tried to limit our thinking to only those things they thought "proper." Being gay was not proper. Same sex partners- unthinkable! My cousin told her parents over the phone about her sexual identity. The sh*t hit the fan. How could this happen to their child? All kinds of prayers went skyward for her. It was as if she had gotten some dreaded disease or something.

Me-- I told my mom and my friends in person. By telling them in person, I wanted to show them that I was still me-- that I hadn't turned into pure evil while they weren't looking. My mom cried and prayed over me and held me. I kind of expected this kind of reaction from her so I was ready. But I was not prepared for what came next though...the guilt trip she tried to lay on me. The 'how- could - you-do-this-to your-grandmother and if-she-knew-what-was-going-on-she'd-die' guilt trip. I was very close to my gram before she got alzheimer's disease and forgot me. I am very vulnerable where she is concerned. This ploy by my mom angered me beyond comprehension. She has a gay brother-my gram's son- so she should not have tried that weak trick. What could I say? She is my mom. As usual, I swallowed my pain and anger. I let her say her piece and excused myself.

Why did I even bother? Between having people pray for me and lecturing me, I guess she thought that my gay disease or phase would pass. Phase - hah! A little respect for my person, if not for my sexuality, would still be much appreciated. They do not understand that because they refuse to acknowledge who I am- they invalidate themselves.

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(twa)

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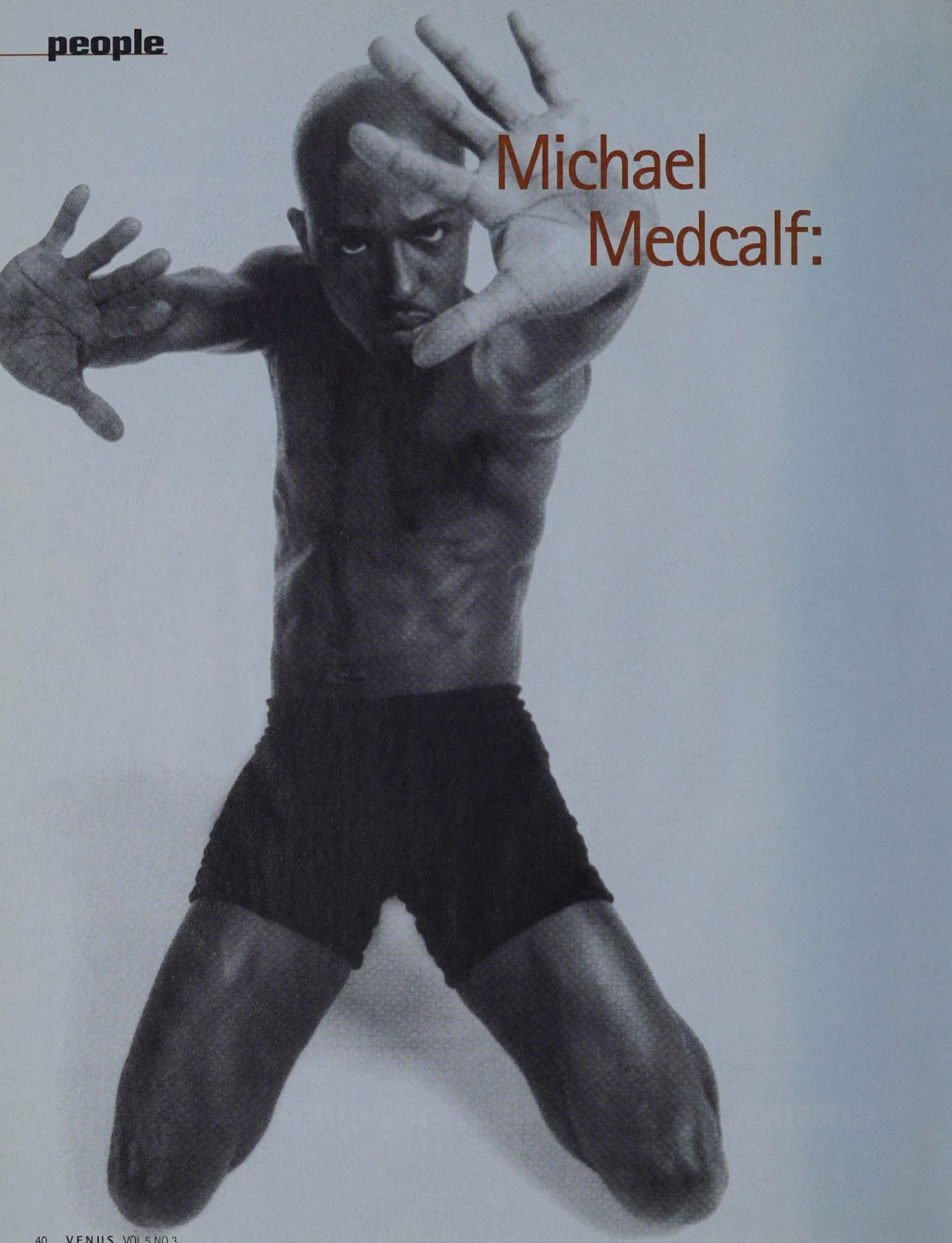
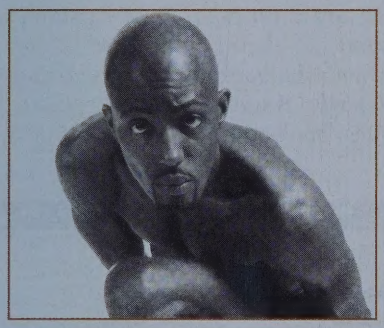


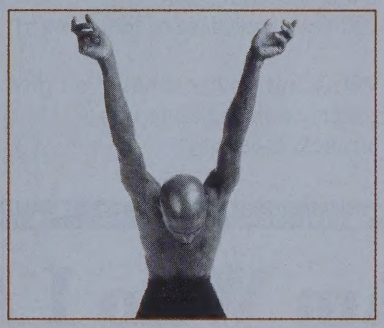
an angel who looked homeward

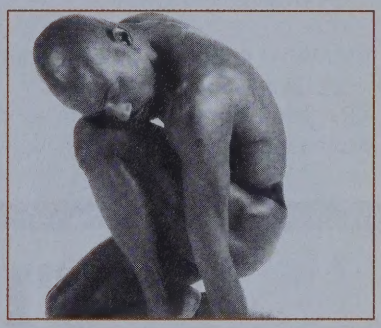
BY PHILL W. PETRIE

There are things you just can't do in life. You can't beat the phone company; you can't make a waiter see you until he's ready to see you; and you can't go home again. --Bill Bryson

Don't tell that to dancer and choreographer Michael Medcalf. This St. Louis native who was raised in Cleveland--home--returned to Cleveland with a vengeance.







After a Christmas holiday visit home and getting acquainted with his brother's children, Medcalf looked homeward.

"This is the right time for Cleveland," he told himself when considering his pending move, "and this is the right time for me."

Although Medcalf had started training in Cleveland at 15 years old and in 1986 graduated from the Cleveland School of the Arts, he left town to learn more. First he went to Philadelphia and trained at University of the Arts. Then, he ventured to New York City--the Mecca of American dance--and studied with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center. He left Manhattan's skyscraper canyons to nest in the mighty canyons of the Rockies. Medcalf spent four fruitful years in Denver, Colorado, working with The Cleo Parker Robinson Ensemble. In this company, he worked with, and learned from, icons in African American dance: Katherine Dunham, Talley Beatty, and Donald McKayle.

"I feel grateful and blessed to have worked with these people," Medcalf ex claimed. "Working with them you soak in as much information as you can." Having trained, studied, worked, and soaked in all that was available to him, Medcalf, Cleveland's son, came home. He didn't make a prodigal return, but one offering through dance the world Medcalf had discovered in the world's canyons and within himself.

"I came back to Cleveland like gangbusters," Medcalf said, "but I didn't have an organization. It takes time to start a company. I burned myself out trying to do too much, too soon, too fast."

For example, he founded Cleveland BLACK Dance Theatre and later renamed it Cleveland Contemporary Dance Theatre ["People didn't get the acronym Bringing Lives And Community Kinetically (together)," Medcalf explained.]. Medcalf also offered free weekly classes in modern dance at his studio ["I'm building this Field of Dreams. I get a gut feeling that people are excited about it."]. Enthusiasm and good will do not pay the rent or put food on the table. Medcalf had to work as a freelance dancer and worked in that capacity with the Cleveland Ballet Dancing Wheels.

Earlier this year, he received a contract to work as performer and choreographer from Ohio Dance Theatre, a nearby Oberlin, Ohio, ballet-based company that does modern dance. Medcalf created two significant dances for the company: "Love-Joy Lane" and "Ceremonies." "Love-Joy Lane" is a dance celebrating the spirit and memory of Medcalf's grandmother who raised him on St. Louis's Joy-Lane before moving to Cleveland. "She passed in 1991," Medcalf said. "I wanted to do something to honor her."

"Ceremonies" comments on the gay black man's place in contemporary society. "What I'm doing is a solo work in progress.. It's my perspective. I don't have all of the answers."

continued from page 27
Twenty Questions

LCR: Same here, Ian & Jon's (two of the characters in *Detached*) relationship is somewhat reminiscent of us.

VM: Was it love at first sight?
RR: For me it was love at first sight. A mutual friend introduced me to this cute guy wearing braces and I knew from the moment we spoke that I wanted to be with him for the rest of my life.
LCR: We were like Dharma and Greg. We didn't date, we just jumped into a relationship.

VM: What gets on your nerves about one another?
RR: He's very analytical about everything, there always has to be a reason why... it can never just be.
LCR: Exactly, he is not accepting that there is cause and effect.

VM: What prompted to write your respective novels?
RR: There was a guy in our BrothaSpeak meeting who made a comment that he would never love himself as long as he was gay and knew that no one else would love him either. And I wanted him (and others like him) to know and honor their truths and be without all the drama.
LCR: *Detached* was something that I always wanted to write. My characters werenít idealistic. They are people with vices and flaws, everyday folks.

VM: Who inspired you to write?
RR: E. Lynn Harris, when I met Lynn in '94, I shared with him that I wanted to write and he told me to "just do it." It was several years later, but I did write the books and I know that if he (along with James Earl Hardy and the countless others) hadn't paved the way, I wouldn't be here to day. So I thank them publically.
LCR: Ricc inspired me by "just doing it!"

VM: What advice would you give couples wanting to go into business together?
RR: Be willing to make a commitment to the vision, communicate and be prepared to sacrifice.
LCR: Make sure that its a common goal and not one vision over the other.

VM: What projects are you currently working on?
RR: We have three new novelist debuting, *The Men's Room* by Michangelo Scruggs, *When the Children Get Together* by R. Bryant Smith and *Discretion* by Sharon Patton.
LCR: *The Best Man* by Dwayne Carter is still delighting readers around the country. So there's plenty to read.

Well there you have it! Ricc and Lorenzo are making strides in the literary world, who says you can't mix business with pleasure. They do it everyday.

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Ana Iza Otis

"I don't have any big political agenda for coming out! I'm out from sheer exhaustion, because it's too much energy to hide."

Ever wonder how "Puffy" gets permission to sample other people's music; or how one goes about using a song in their commercial or film? Well, Ana Iza Otis, vice president of the Clyde Otis Music Group, is one of those busy, out, up and coming sistahs who provides just that.

The Clyde Otis Music group, a company founded 40 year ago by Ana's father, Clyde Otis, is the only African American, full-service, traditional music publisher in the world. The company houses the rights to 4,000+ songs, in addition to having sub-publishers all over the world. The company, run by Ana and her two brothers, owns rights to songs sung by various artists from Brook Benton, & Dinah Washington to Tatiyana Ali, & Krazie Bone of Bones-Thugs and Harmony.

Clyde Otis, wrote hits for such artists as Aretha Franklin, Sarah Vaughn, Dinah Washington and Brook Benton, and was the first African American man to head an A&R department. . . Mercury Records.

Following in her daddy's footsteps of major accomplishments, Ana became vice president of the company 2 years ago, but is no stranger to working in the business. She began her career at seven as an original cast member on Sesame Street; from there, she began singing jingles on various children's albums. She continued her singing career, opening for the likes of Dizzy Gillespie, (whom she affectionately refers to as "Uncle Dizzy"), Phoebe Snow, Etta Jones & Houston Person, and has been asked to take over Dakota Station's gigs when she wasn't able to do them.

Nancy Wilson sang and recorded a version of a song Ana wrote entitled "I'll Be A Song." (Check your Nancy collection and see if you've got it!) And, not only did Nancy record it, but she actually sang it in Fred Williamson's film, *The Big Score*. Recently, Ana became a member of NYWIFT, (New York Women In Film & Television). She is a member of the Music, Programming and Feature Film committees. To add to these accomplishments, Anna is not just a singer, but a sculptor and writer as well.

Ana is a proud and out lesbian, a quality that is few and far between in this business. When asked about her coming out story, she replied, "What time is it?" On the real, Ana states, "I don't have any big political agenda for coming out! I'm out from sheer exhaustion, because it's too much energy to hide. I am constantly coming out! Every time you meet someone new, or you're faced with any kind of situation where you're going to an event, you're coming out. So in essence, I just came out."

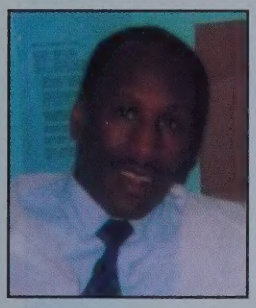
"We bring beauty to the world. We are gay because we are instruments that need to create change in the world...it's a gift. If gay people, for one damn day, stopped doing everything that they do, this world would be gray and one color!"

–Kimberly "Q" Purnell

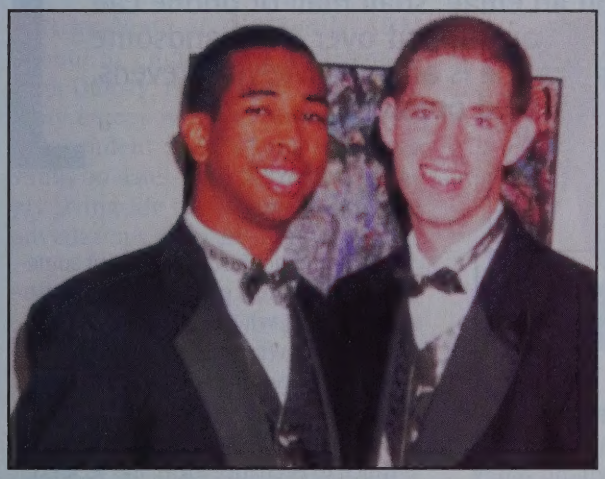
Talk show diva Queen Latifah managed to take a day off from her hectic schedule to participate in the Coney Island Mermaid Parade as Queen Mermaid. Just goes to show you how royal she really is!

PHOTOGRAHY BY KIMBERLY "Q" PURNELL

congrats



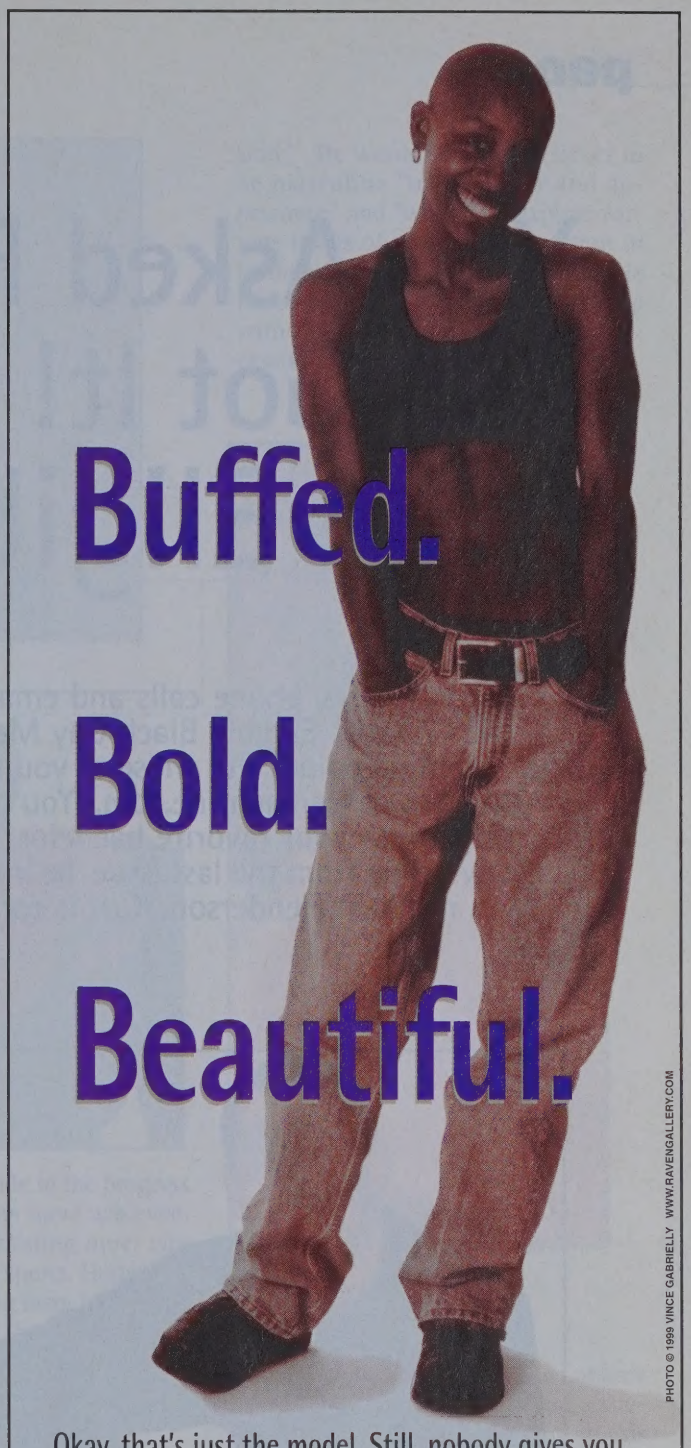
SHERWOOD "WOODY" BROWN, a Brooklyn Hospital Center Outreach coordinator, received the 'Black Men of Distinction Award' from New York State Senator Marty Markowitz during a ceremony hosted by anchorman Maurice DuBois of NBC's 'Today in New York.' Held at the New York Marriott Brooklyn, the 'Black Men of Distinction Award' was given for community service, entrepreneurial activities and civic involvement. "This award really means a lot to me," said Brown. "It's very important to acknowledge the many Black men who are making positive contributions to society." Woody is also an active member of GMAD, Gay Men of African Descent.



DYSHAUN G. MUHAMMAD, (l), was recently named one of 10 Outstanding Young Atlantans of the Year by Outstanding Atlanta, a local leadership council.

In 1998 he was appointed senior assistant to Georgia's first openly gay elected official, Atlanta City councilmember Cathy Woolard. In this capacity he manages the councilmember's activities with regards to infrastructure, public safety, transportation, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered affairs.

He was elected treasurer for the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Caucus of the Young Democrats of America at the group's national convention in Little Rock, Arkansas in August of 1999. DyShaun, 24, was born and raised in Madison, Alabama. He currently resides in downtown Atlanta with his boyfriend of five years, Jeremy Black.



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You Asked For It! You Got It! More Eligible Bachelors!

Cards, letters, phone calls and email poured in after our last issue featured the "7 Most Eligible Black Gay Men." The Brothas definitely want to keep this thing going. For those of you who want to reach these guys directly, go to www.venusmagazine.com. You can send an email, snail mail or phone call directly to your favorite bachelor. Now if you flipped over the handsome guy below from the last issue, be informed that he is actually Melvin Stevens. . . . not Kurt Henderson. Kurt is correctly featured opposite,

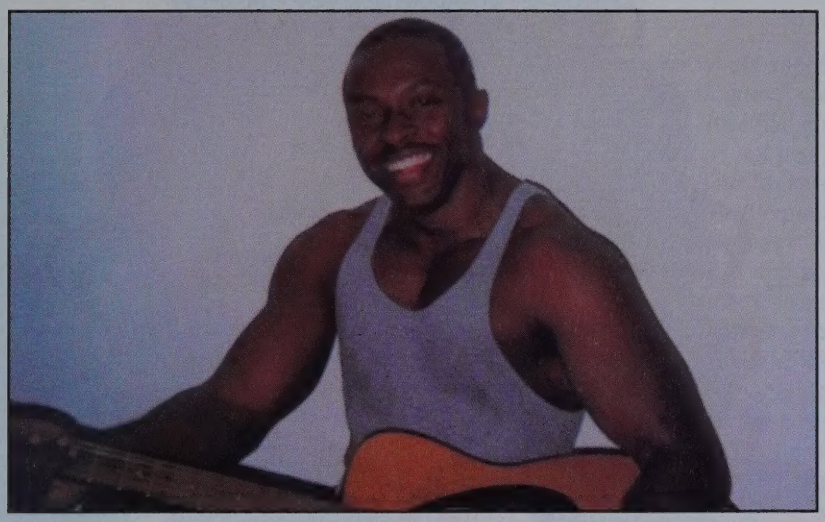
Melvin Stephens, 26
Jersey City, NJ

A customer account executive for SkyTel Communication Inc., Melvin's hobbies include traveling, listening to gospel music, walking, reading, and spending time with friends and family.

"I seek someone who is spiritually sound and a firm believer in a higher power and not just luck. I want someone who is not possessive but trusting, a man who is not afraid to disagree, "but who won't go to bed angry at me for my beliefs." Communication is a top priority for Melvin, as is the ability to "find a common ground with which to exchange ideas and feelings."

His idea of a romantic date?
"I first Listen carefully to what they say and plan around things they like to do or have never done. I am very thoughtful and full of surprises on dates. I think you should keep people guessing and that way it becomes a meaningful experience for you both," says Melvin.

The most important step in a successful relationship is being friends as well as lovers, according to Melvin. "Any man that I date needs to be someone that I would love to be with for an extended amount of time. I feel that being friends is a must."



Tony Robinson, 25
Alexandria, VA

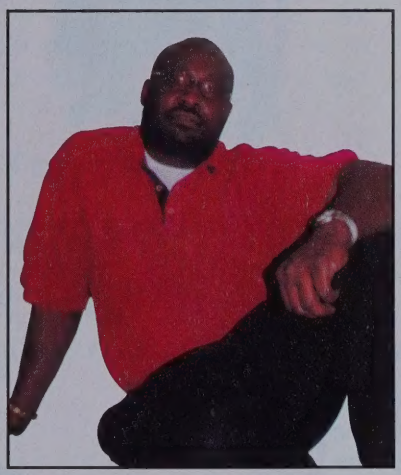
This graduate of the Florida A&M School of Engineering is originally from Quincy, FL. A writer and artist, Tony enjoys movies ("usually weird independent stuff"), long talks and strolls on dates, working out, and simply living life to the fullest by being adventurous and care-free.

"When it comes to a man, I appreciate a brother who is straight-up and not pretentious. I like a brother who doesn't feel the need to expound on his accomplishments, but is instead just natural, laid-back and comfortable enough not to be an annoying braggart. I like a man who is a man."

Kurt Henderson
Huston Texas

Kurt is a Junior at Paul Quinn college, majoring in psychology. He also works as an escrow assistant for a commercial real estate firm. "I am a man of sensitivity and yet many dangers. I have the need to be expressive and the need to be creative. Limiting myself stops the growthof my creativity and without growth you become robotic."

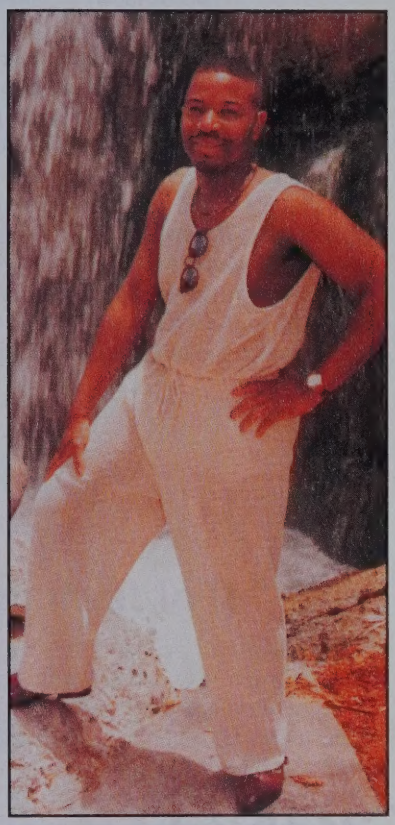
A native of Texas, "where everything



grows," Kurt takes pride in the progress that Black Americans have achieved. "I do my share by assisting inner city youth programs and sports. Hopefully, my guidance is steering them in the right direction. I believe that a person is known by what he contributes, not by what he says."

Kurt claims several hobbies but most enjoys listening to all types of music, cooking , horse back riding , meeting people, traveling and collecting African American Art.

His requirements for a mate? Kurt is rooted in spirituality. As such, he wants his mate to have, in his words, "an active relationship with the Lord and a strong desire to live a life pleasing to God." He would like this believer to be masculine "in character and appearance" and "willing to explore various levels of physical interaction in terms of recreation and sports." He feels communication and friendship with his mate are the keys to a successful relationship.



Anthony Bolton, 33
Jackson, MS

Honesty, trust, and faith in the Lord are the key ingredients to building a successful relationship, according to this full time volunteer for the Youth Corps. Losing a leg in an automobile accident 10 years ago has not dampened Anthony's romantic spirit. "Everything else is working real good! I try to be upfront it and stay realistic about my expectations." Anthony is naturally attracted to "hard" butch brothers. On a date he enjoys good conversation and great music, then "if something happens it happens."

KICKIN' IT with SEXY! Gretchen Palmer

BY ANDERSON JONES

The time couldn't be more right for Gretchen Palmer to tackle the role of Jade in 'Trois.' It's a new film from director Rob Hardy's Rainforest Productions that explores the intrigue and consequences of sexual adventures within a marriage - from a black perspective. As Palmer says, "it's a story we haven't seen ourselves in. A *Fatal Attraction*, *Basic Instinct* kind of movie." The timing of the project is perfect for her because she plays a sexually assertive, bisexual strip club waitress just as she's starting to come into her own as a twenty-something woman.

"I took the role not because of the sexuality," says the newlywed Palmer from the home she shares in L.A. with Blake, her actor-screenwriter husband of one year. "But, I think the older I get, the more sexuality I exude. It just happened to be at a time when I feel the most attractive, the most sexual in my life and I could totally relate to the character and do it without trying."

It wasn't always that way. If you spend any time at all renting videos when Blockbuster's sold out of popular fare like *The Matrix* or clicking through late-night, B-grade cable, you probably recognize Palmer from some of her earlier, mostly forgettable roles. She's been part of Master P's harem in *I Got the Hook Up* and starred in Wes Craven's horror film, *Wishmaster*, before he got wise to the Scream franchise. Those roles were dim-witted bimbos - all tits, ass and legs. Of course, she made her mark as a Diet Pepsi Uh-Huh Girl. "Sex is what sold Diet Pepsi," she says. "Pushing up our breasts in little, short-type dresses." Things are different now: "There was a point when I remember trying to be sexy. Now, I think I just am that way."

So, it's no wonder Jade would appeal to Palmer. "She is so complex," she says. "We all have that little bad girl inside." But her characters not just a bad girl. "My intentions are to keep my son," she says. Divorced from a professional athlete, Jade has a 5-year-old to raise by herself and accepting an offer to join a married couple in a menage a trois means financial security and a better life. Not to mention some sexual healing. Things get complicated when the two women begin to prefer each other's company without the man who sets things in motion.

"She's my alter ego," Palmer says. "She's the other side of who I feel like I am. As an actress, I have never had a role that had so much meat in it."

OK. Jade's just doing it for the money. But would Palmer ever consider entering into a three-way just for the fun of it?

"I would never tell," she says coyly, and a bit too soon. She's obviously expecting the question. Then, after some consideration, she says, "I think everybody kind of thinks about it." And finally, "Everyone has. It's not who I am, but, slightly-sure." A definite maybe.

Palmer's career began as a dancer in New York on scholarship with the Alvin Ailey dance troupe. Then, as luck would have it, Sidney Poitier cast her in his 1985 comeback attempt, "Fast Forward." "I was a kid, kid, kid, kid, kid, kid," she recalls. "A baby, baby." The movie went to video almost directly but it taught Palmer two things: one, actor's get paid better than dancers. "I was like, 'OK. Dancer's wages, actress' wages," she says. "I realized it was my passion; it was my dream." And two, sometimes even well-paid actors don't work. Even Poitier - the best of the best. "Everybody goes through it. In Hollywood it doesn't have anything to do with anything. "I didn't know that Black actors don't work. As soon as I found out, I booked," says Palmer, "I swear to God!"

It was the worst of all this past summer, during what the TV networks call "pilot season," when the widely reported conspicuous absence of minority cast members in the industry touched her life - and wallet. "Pilot season was the slowest it's ever been," says Palmer, who spends her downtime running a business of gently used show biz fashion on online auction site ebay.com. "I did one job and five auditions. That was, like, really bad." But she thinks it's more about Hollywood's obsession with youth - "You had to be under 19! - than with color. I never really thought of myself as a black actress," she says. "I thought of myself as an actress. I am a black actress - I'm not denying that. But I haven't been cheated. I feel really blessed. It is a reality. It's not an illusion but I also think it's a state of mind, too." In Palmer's current state of mind - she's pregnant and due in the new year - she's not waiting for a TV sitcom or another film to come around. She's taking control of her own career by mounting and starring in a play she wrote with her girlfriend even as *Trois* hits theaters. It's all about timing.

"And as soon as I have this baby," she promises, the giddiness in her voice impossible to contain, "I'll be back out there!"

"She's my alter ego," Palmer says. "She's the other side of who I feel like I am. As an actress, I have never had a role that had so much meat in it."

Gary Dourdan of TV's A Different World, Kenya Moore-Miss USA, and Gretchen Palmer star in Rainforest Production's TROIS. Check out www.trois-the movie.com

Chanté Moore

Comes Full Circle with: "This Moment Is Mine"

Chante Moore is back and hotter than ever. Her latest CD on Silas MCA Universal Music is entitled , "THIS MOMENT IS MINE" and it's a true affirmation of a young woman taking complete control of her life.

The first single, produced by Rodney "Dark Child" Jerkins, is entitled "If I Gave Love," questions true love while the album's debut chart topping single, "Chante's Got A Man," produced by Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis, is a heartwarming testimonial for all those good brothers out there. Label mate Joe Joe, current singing half of KC & Joe Joe, joins our sultry songstress as friends become lovers on "See You In A Different Light'. On "Easy,": Ms. Moore finds comfort and warmth in a committed relationship.

Moore isn't afraid to reveal her vulnerability as she searches for true love and happiness. On this journey she finally discovers the inner beauty of loving oneself. The Moment belongs to Chanté Moore - a soaring R&B songstress!

review by Akai Jamal

Chanté Moore with "R & B Country Boy" Calvin Richardson, and new generation soul singer, Jesse Powell. The trio recently completed the 24 city Seagram's Gin Jam Music Tour.

Me'Shell Ndegeocello

On her Maverick Recordings release *Bitter*, Me'Shell Ndegeocello incorporates wrenchingly honest lyrics with deftly crafted mixes of piano, guitar, bass, and drums to accompany the sometimes gorgeous, sometimes raunchy, always sultry harmonies to her self-penned songs.

"Writing is a continual process for me," she says. "Sometimes a song comes while we're out on tour and I teach it to the band so I can remember it. I wrote most of the songs on *Bitter* before we started recording. 'Beautiful' is the newest one. I wrote that two days before we started recording. It came about because the drummer didn't show up, I had some time, and I just had this tune."

MeShell notes that the whole album represents about three years of writing. Meshell feels strongly about the album being taken as a whole.

"I think the idea of singles puts great limitations on artists. When you make a piece of work, you want people to hear the whole finished thing."

Like every album MeShell has made, *Bitter* is much more than a loose collection of recent compositions. In its overall architecture, it touches on life's deepest themes: faith, love, loyalty, beauty, grace. There are even two instrumental pieces, "Adam" and "Eve" that give *Bitter* added context. "I admit I saw the complete picture in my head before we started," says Meshell. "I wanted to make something people could get into texturally. Simplicity is a gift, an that's what this album is all about."

Sex Talk

DeAlan Wilson

Q:

I need help. I cannot have an orgasm with my partner. He's very special and I really try to get off with him but I freeze up. I enjoy masturbating alone while I'm watching adult tapes and I tried giving that up for a while hoping it would help. I try to think about him when we're making love. Now I understand how women feel because lots of times I have to fake it. I'm really not satisfied with sex. Maybe because I'm so afraid of catching a disease or something. I've had a lot of friends pass on before the age of 29. When I'm alone its no problem at all. I guess I feel safe with myself. What is your advice?

Living in Confusion

A:

Dear Living In Confusion,
I hear your confusion, dilemma, and frustration. And, no doubt, you are experiencing quite a bit of anxiety. The behavior that you are dealing with may be representative of several issues. There may have been some abuse, more specifically, some sexual abuse in your background. You may be exhibiting some problems with "true" intimacy, in other words, emotional intimacy. And, yes, you may have a phobic reaction (irrational fear) to disease or illness: or combinations thereof. However, without more detailed information, all that may be expressed here is endless speculation, which would only serve to increase your anxiety and confusion. You are correct in your feeling that you should seek professional help. This would allow you the opportunity to explore your inner world and experiences and discover the truth of your feelings.
What is very clear is----that the core of your issues is within "fear" and "trust". I wish you a safe and clear journey toward "sexual fulfillment".

Geanie Bond is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist practicing in Atlanta, GA. She specializes in hypnosis and sex therapy and can be reached at 404-256-6709.

Ask Marian

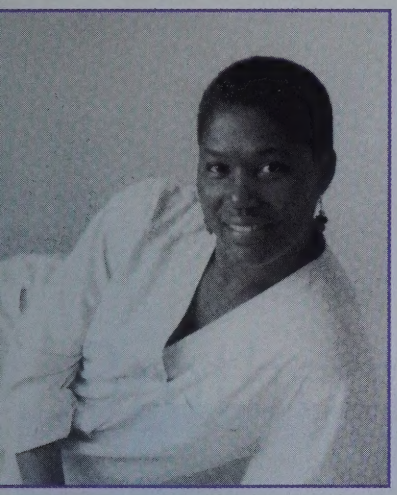
Q:

I was at the cafeteria at my new job and someone asked me if I was married or had kids. I came out to them by describing my partner and they asked me if I wanted to keep this information confidential. I said no, because I thought why should I hide my family. Now I am wondering if I did the right thing. I wouldn't ask another person if they wanted to keep their relationship and family confidential.
No Secrets

A:

Dear No Secrets,
Good for you for being true to yourself and sharing your family life with your co-worker. You and your loved ones have the right to recognition. Although it could be perceived that your co-worker is reacting to her own homophobia, it could also be perceived that your co-worker understands that not all same gender loving people are out to everyone. If the latter is the case, then it was quite courteous of her to ask. For those of us who are out, hiding our relationships and family life feels awful. Feel good that you were "real" and continue to live out your reality with others.

Marian Farrah, CSW, is president of Farrah & Associates, a NY consulting firm. She can be reached at AskMarian@venusmagazine.com.



Cosmic Rhythms

By Joy Isoke

Times are changing. Astrologically, we are going through major shifts in our solar system. The 90s have been influenced by the planet Pluto. Pluto is the Great Transformer and Regenerator. We shall continue to have challenges to catapult us to the next level of consciousness and awareness in our lives. Pluto has also been known as the Lord of the Underworld. You may have noticed hidden information surfacing, organized crime on the rise, and random acts of violence and destruction. All of which may appear senseless, but in fact is part of Cosmos shaking loose the debris to prepare for the new seeds to be planted for Century 2000.

Astro-numerically 2000, which vibrates to the number 2, is associated with the planet Venus. Venus brings us closer to our hearts and souls, our personal relationships, and our relationship with life itself. This will be the emphasis and focus for the upcoming century. As human beings, we shall be challenged to pay attention and improve how we interact and respond to one another. This applies globally and locally. Venus relates to beauty and social interaction-mainly the harmonious and peaceful exchanges, but this does not mean there will not be some discord before and during the shift.

On a personal level, the relationship you have with yourself is vitally important. You may sense a constant urgency to improve your sense or self-worth and self-esteem, both spiritually and materially. By improving your relationship with yourself, all your other relationships will improve. The irony is the more we love and respect ourselves, our lives are thankful, the more we expand beyond ourselves touching the lives of others.

Wherever you are in your life, prepare for the next level. Pluto will help you transform or discard anything that no longer serves your life. With the anticipation regarding the new millennium, remember that Venus will be expressing her energy to reach our hearts, create more harmony and peace, and teach us what it truly means to reach out and touch someone, universally.

Q: What are some ways Astrology can help with self awareness?
M.N. of Atlanta

A: Astrology is a scientific tool which gives an astrologer insight into the types of planetary energy that was surrounding your life at birth. These energy influences permeate your life expression in such a way that your personality and character are given shape and form accordingly. Given this information about your place among the stars, you can better see who you are. You can also come to appreciate natural talents and gifts that you have put on the back burner for whatever reason. You can better see the affirmations of yourself...the person you were born to be.

Q: How can astrology help with relationships?
Single in Arizona

A: By comparing two individual charts and combining them to create a "composite", I am able to see the dynamics, energy exchanges, and challenges you may have within your relationship. Any type of relationship can be examined in this way. Intimate relationships are often looked at for compatibility and longevity. But also your chart would be looked at to see exactly what you are looking for and what you have to offer, and what is your love nature.

Joy Isoke is an intuitive astrologer & consultant. She has been involved in astrology for 24 years and maintains her practice in Scottsdale Arizona.

CARRIBEAN PRIDE–A standing room only crowd of authors and poets of Carribean descent and their friends gathered for a reading during New York City's Black Gay Pride. **1.** Sunu Chandy and Dayo Gore **2.** Karen Paik, Faslyn Felicien, Andre Francis, Rhonda Alphonso **3.** Dawn Nedd and Lauretta Ivey **4.** Surabhi Kukke and Svati Shah of South Asian Lesbian and Gay Association, SALGA

Brothers of the Islands

[l-r] Author-H. Nigel Thomas, Steve Theordore, Colin Robinson, Carribean Pride organizer-Andre Knights, Andre Francis, Everard Bascoe and O'Henry Award-winning author-Thomas Glave of Jamaica.

Eartha Kitt

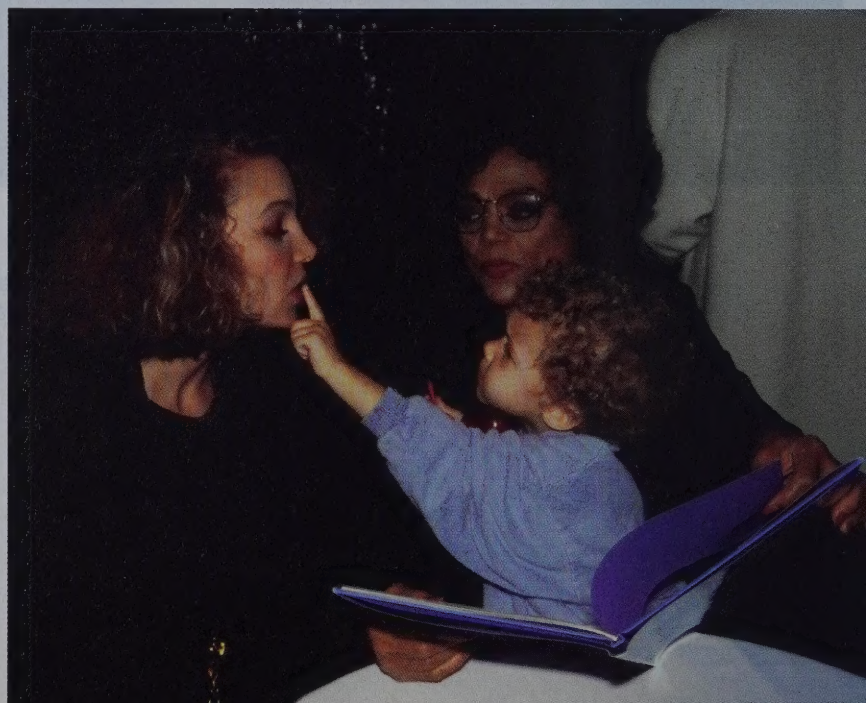
Although Eartha had a natural talent for performing that brought her prizes in public school, she later confessed that, "it never occurred to me that one could be a professional singer or actress. I was simply drawn into it by circumstance." The pivotal event in her rise to show business fame was a successful audition for celebrated choreographer Katherine Dunha. This resulted in a dance training scholarship, and eventual tours with a Dunham troupe. The company traveled throughout North and South America, as well as Europe. Kitt left the troupe in Paris, a city that fascinated her. She secured a job singing in a local boite called Carroll's, which included the legendary Orson Welles among its regular clientele. Welles promptly dubbed Eartha "The most exciting woman in the world."

The come-hither purr of Eartha Kitt, which she can effortlessly deploy in half a dozen languages, is one of the most unforgettable sounds in popular music. She is such a physically striking woman that in the beginning many skeptics wondered whether her magic could ever be fully captured by records. Recordings placed the spotlight on her light, vibrato-laden voice, which some considered an acquired taste. What they failed to take in to account is that Kitt is not a typical pop singer, but rather a consummate song stylist. Typically assuming the persona of a feline seductress, she knows exactly how to wield her unique vocal instrument for maximum dramatic effect. Depending on the mood she seeks to create, results are by turns charming, humorous and frighteningly intense. Kitt was one of the most popular female artists on the RCA roster in the 1950s and her latest CD is an anthology which gathers together a generous sampling of her finest performances and signature songs.

LADY IN RED-(r) Kitt at the Fourth Annual Red Ball in NYC. KICKIN' IT-Kitt with Arthur Mitchell, founder of the Dance Theatre of Harlem at the 30tAnniversary celebration.

Below-Eartha spends time with her daughter Kitt at Carley Simon's Book Party in Central Park.

Photography by Tina Paul



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Breaking up is Hard to do

Tevin looses it after his recent break up with someone whom he loved very deeply. As you all may have heard by now, sultry recording star Tevin Campbell was outed to the public via the infamous LA Police Dept. After his arrest last summer for sexual solicitation and possession of marijuana, a lot has been said about Tevin and what could have possibly driven him to this road block in his life.

According to inside sources, Tevin had unfortunately realized that the one he loved so much, had a hidden agenda. He was out to use Tevin to acquire a record deal. Tevin hasn't had any recent hits, and with the non success of his last release his young beau moved on to another bed . . . the bed of a male record exec. My sources tell me this guy is as hot as Texas Petes hot sauce! But get this, the undercover cop Tevin picked up bore a striking resemblance to his lost love . . . who incidentally did get his record deal and while in the process of putting the CD together, asked Tevin to appear on one of his singles.

Tevin is finally all grown up and for the most part now he can just be Tevin. He definitely needs our support more than ever. Please go out and buy his new self-titled CD. Its in stores now. Write to the label, his management and fan club. Let them know that we buy his music and support him because he can sing, not because of who he sleeps with.

"Where's the Love, D.C.?"

Veteran soul superstar singer Miss Patti Labelle, was asking this question at D.C.'s Constitution Hall during a concert last summer. The presence of Miss Chaka Khan at Labelle's concert clearly was extraordinary and powerful; even powerful enough to have everyone so mesmerized with Chaka in the audience that the interest for Miss Labelle was stagnated at times. Patti herself realized this while singing her rendition of Rose Royce's 'Love Don't Live Here Anymore.' She began asking the audience "Where's the Love, DC?" She repeated this over and over. . . there was no response. So in an attempt to win back the Chakaholic drunk crowd, Miss Labelle cleverly rearranged the classic single to say "DC, Y'all abandoned me, Love don't live here anymore!" Don't get me wrong, Miss Patti was most definitely Patti but what happened next will carry you. . .

"...I'm Not Foxy Brown or Lil' Kim! ..."

For all of us Thirty-something and above Children who truly love Miss Thang well enough to frequent her shows, we're no stranger to that part of her set we'll just call Amateur Night with Patti. For those of you who don't know, let me break it down for ya. Patti invites several people from the audience to share the spotlight with her. She encourages them to do whatever it is they believe they can do best. For the most part you either have singers who try to challenge Miss Diva, or you'll have some who just want to dance. And that is what we ended up with on that rainy night in DC. The 'Song was Somebody Loves ya Baby.' Now I ask you, why did this cute-ass twenty-something young brotha decide he wanted to get Freaky with The ONE ?

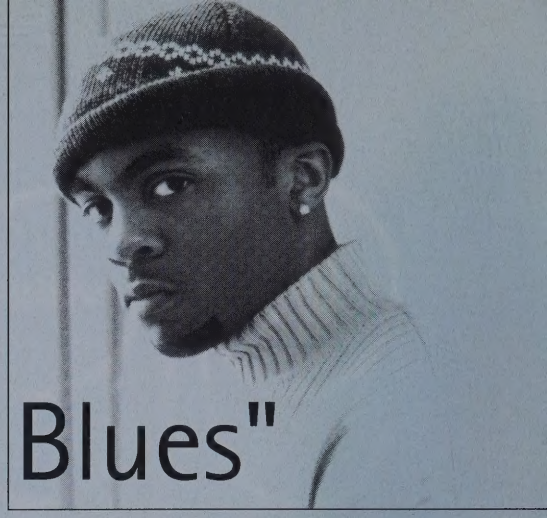
Patti was simply not having it. In his first attempt he grabbed her and gyrated his highly energized hips closer to her. She immediately backed him up and told him, "Don't play ya self suga." The audience was stunned! "Just stand over there," Ms. Diva commanded. So as she went to the next contender, I guess he just couldn't resist, so he tried to grind her again. Well, this being TOO much for the Queen to bear, she yelled "Get Off My Stage!!! My name is not Foxy Brown Or Lil' Kim, You Just played yourself, SUGA!!

. . .Speaking of Lil' Kim and Foxy Brown, . . .

did you know Foxy Brown has had it with Miss Lil' Kim? She expresses it loudly and clearly on her new release off the soundtrack for the Martin Lawrence movie 'Blue Streak.' But did you get to see Lil' Kim's outfit and hair on the MTV Music Video Awards? Well, for those of you who didn't, let me tell you, it was one hot number. It was a one-titty-in and one-titty-out number. It was so hot that her presenter, The Legendary Soul Diva Miss Diana Ross, felt she had to reach out and palm and jiggle Lil' Kim's Boobs. I guess she was trying to make this world a better place with her hands.

Too Hot to Handle!

Lil' Kim serves drama at the 1999 M TV Music Awards



Jack Knight "Gypsy Blues"

The problem with some producers and songwriters is that they want to be artists. Sometimes it works, sometimes it stinks.

Take Jack Knight. His debut CD *Gypsy Blues* on Universal Records is unfortunately appropriately titled: it'll give you the blues.

It's not that Knight doesn't have talent. He has loads of it. His production and writing skills have graced lablemate Monifah's sophomore disc *Mo'Hogany*. He's worked with Blackstreet, Total and Chico Debarge. But on *Gypsy Blues*, Knight's talents are largely squandered on second-rate material.

Take the cuts "Do What You Wanna Do," "Rescue Me," and "Best Friend." They start out as good ideas. But Knight fails to go the territory and create well-crafted songs.

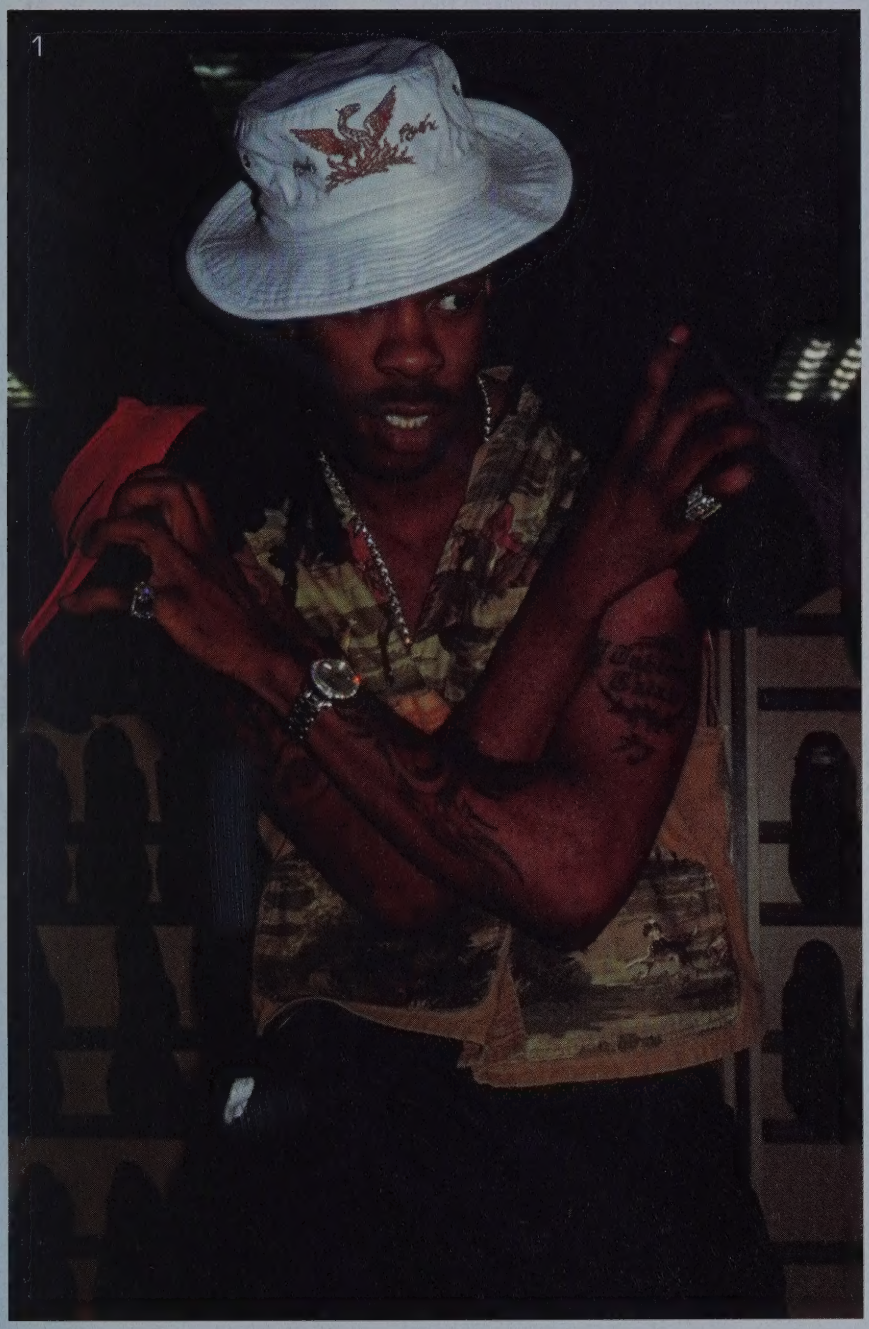
Knight's compositions could use a heavy dose of realism, and not the kind that litters so much of current hip-hop cum rhythm and blues. I mean the type of realism that doesn't make light of cheating (as in"Best Friend"), trivialize dysfunctional romantic relationships (as in "Do What You Wanna Do") and sanitize spirituality (as in "Rescue Me"). Marvin Gaye managed to make you wet your drawers and bemoan the state of the world. Lauryn Hill wraps her silky vocals around sinewy ballads and dope raps, all without acting or dressing like a hoe. As I mentioned earlier, Knight has good ideas but makes me think his ego sabotaged what could've been a better disc. Maybe next time.

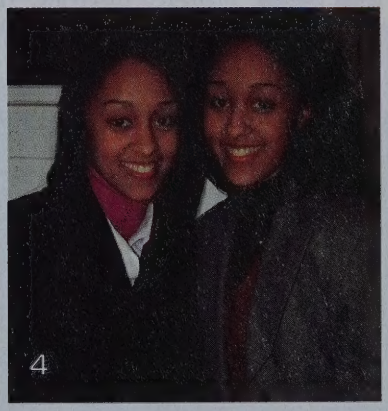
Steven G. Fullwood

SOLE: *More Than Skin Deep*

With her in-your-face lyrics and brusque style, SOLE's Skin Deep establishes her as female rapper with real rapping and rhyming skill. Full of boast and swagger the underground hit "i Yi Yi," recalls "Who Dat" with its incessant chorus and Chris "Tricky" Stewart produced beats: "If you get dough, push benzos/Your neck, writst and fist glow/You spit flows, your clique rolls/ and ride with the red zone/ Say Iy Yi Yi, Iy Yi Yi." SOLE makes it clear that she's ready and willing to please.

A native of Kansas City, MO, SOLE knew she would one day perform and started on the road to stardom in local talent shows as half of the rap duo called Devine. The decision to move to the music talent pool of Atlanta after college that ultimate led SOLE to solo success.





3. Kimberly "Q" Purnell 1,2,4 Tina Paul

1. Busta Rhymes introduces Bushi by GBX-shoes designed by busta rhymes **2. Foxy Brown** arrives to sign autographs at Coconut Records, NYC **3. Phylicia Rashad** smiles for paparrati at Isaac Hayse's birthday party, NYC **4. Tia & Tamara Mowry** on hand at the sony Building in NYC.

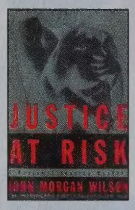
Faith the Size of a Mustard Seed

by Jenenne R. Macklin
review by Jacquelyn F. Luther

In an easy to read format author, pastor, and licensed clinical social worker, Jenenne R. Macklin guides the reader insightfully to address specific situations in her new book *Faith the Size of a Mustard Seed.* The book offers help and inspiration through real life examples that touch upon our own personal experiences, our friends and family. Topical chapter titles such as 'In the Storms of Life', 'Living with Loss',and 'Accepting Change' provide fast track spiritual help concerning day to day living. The writer takes the reader through an analysis of the topic, transitions the reader through the situation, and closes each chapter with modules for working through the issue. In simple and concise language, Jenenne Macklin provides guidance for everyday living with faith that each lesson will take root and sprout solutions.

Justice at Risk

John Morgan Wilson
Doubleday, 1999



Justice at Risk, John Morgan Wilson's third installment in his justice mystery series has an elaborate maze of characters, none of the usual suspects are present. A mystery in drag is what Wilson has managed to create. The main character, Benjamin Justice, a former journalist-- is putting his life back together after losing almost everything, his lover, his career and his perspective. After regaining his sobriety, Justice has to find some work. His first big break, writing and producing for a documentary series turns into a nightmare from which he may not awaken. The story is decorated with the characters, we want to see. Their is something for everybody from the transgendered lesbian to the bear-backing Sado-Masochist, Wilson leaves no one out.

Breaking the Chains of Low Self-Esteem

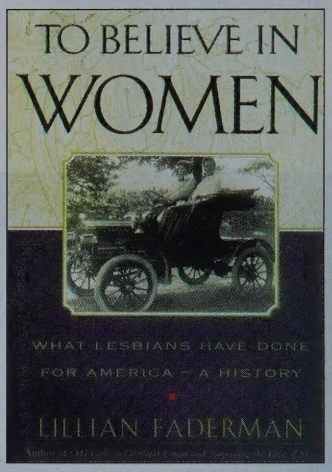
Marilyn J. Sorensen, Ph.D. 1999

Have you ever asked yourself, 'why is this person acting this way?' Or more important, 'Why am I reacting to them in this manner?' Does your self-esteem have anything to do with it? And exactly how do you define "self-esteem."

Unlike many of the self-help authors of the nineties, Marilyn J. Sorensen is very clear about her objectives. She states clearly what she believes must be done to establish a healthier relationship with ourselves, and offers clear examples as to why and how our relationship with ourselves can sometimes become distorted. Marilyn J. Sorensen, PhD. tries to put self-esteem into healthy, no non-sense terms. She also gives us a second look at how society's constructions of gender roles has contributed to low self-esteem in both men and women.

To Believe In Women, What Lesbians have Done for American History

Lillian Faderman, 1999



Lillian Faderman takes us back to the Suffrage Movement, when women were still trying to win the right to vote. She asks us to remember the courage of the women who fought for the rights of all women, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and straight. Faderman shows us what opportunities were available to women at the turn of the century, and what these pioneer women, some of whom lived openly together managed to accomplish.

We walk through the early 1800s with these women who were once considered property and watch how they demanded, fought and eventually won the right to vote and what that meant. Many African American women are mentioned, but no one woman is focused on throughout the book. Women such as Rebecca Perot, a 19th century Shaker leader who founded a predominantly female African-American Quaker group in Philadelphia; or Pauli Murray, an African-American woman, who practiced law during the 40s, a key feminist leader during the 60s, and one of the first female priest in the Episcopal church during the 70s-- is also addressed. From these women we realizes that anything can be accomplished and that everything is possible, the sky is the limit.

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On The Real Side, A History of African American Comedy from Slavery to Chris Rock Review and interview by Lincoln Pettiway

Mel Watkins takes us to the other side of humor in his book by examining historical context in which African American humor emerged.

Watkins shows how external social forces have affected African-American comedy. Watkins goes on to show how many of the stereotypes presented in African American comedy such as "the Coon", "Sambo" and "Uncle Tom" were originally survival techniques which evolved into comedy. Watkins uses historical facts to back-up these observations.

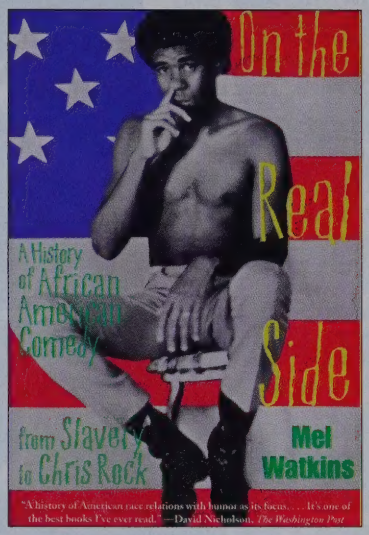
"On the Real Side" is not a textbook but feels rather academic in places. Originally released in 1994, with additional materia. At 664 pages, it doesn't forget much. Watkins served as a book review editor for The New York Times Book Review and answered the following questions for Venus.

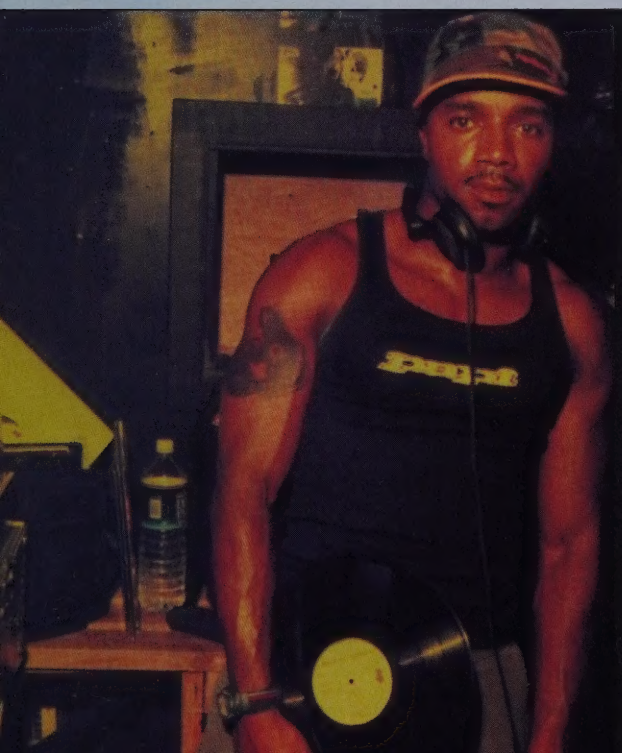
Why did you focus so closely on the life of Richard Pryor towards the end of the book? What was so appealing about him?

"I thought Richard Pryor was doing something different than anyone else at that time," mused Watkins. "He had more sense of the situation because he talked about things that were taboo." Watkins continued, "I think that we often can get trapped in our own time slot, and trapped in the reality that we know. But when I went back and looked at the old vaudeville humor, and the servant comics of the 30s and 40s,and it went from slavery to vaudeville, and (then) to the tent shows, and then to filmed black humor -- I discovered a commonality and I started to see beyond the surface."

Why did you use history as a vehicle to tell this story?

"I did it because I thought it was a way to get people interested in the social history of the African American culture," said Watkins. "There is such a direct parallel between the evolution of black comedy and black freedom where we were locked into the closet and controlled by white people as to what was seen of us. Richard Pryor could not have existed without the Civil Rights Movement -- there were comics as witty as Richard Pryor telling jokes as witty as Richard Pryor, but they could not step on the stage and talk about the things he talked about.





UNMASKING UNKNOWN

by Akai Jamal

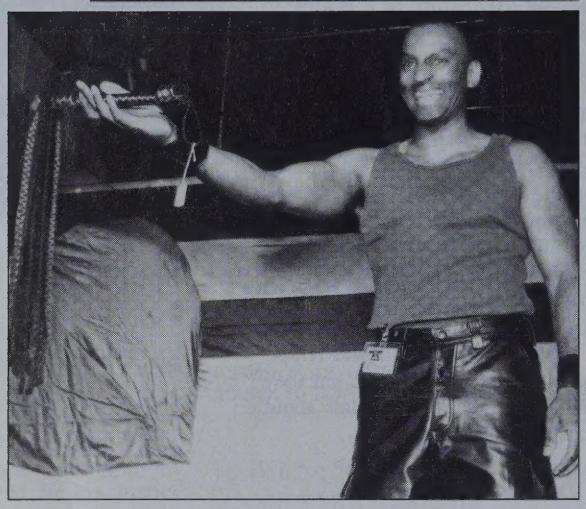
When DJ Unknown, the house DJ at Club 'Suspect' in Manhattan dropped his needle into the groove of Trina & Tamara's , track "What You Came Here For" my temperature began to rise. First the beat hit me - Bam! Then those lyrics -Bouyaaah! I was in a hip hop daze. A slave to the rhythm. Then with a twist of his wrist Unknown began his magic spell. The second ingredient was a taste of Faith Evan's monster jam "Love Like This." Brothers were on the floor testifying to that Chic "Freak Out" baseline . .

"I have been spinning since I was child," confesses Unknown. "My brother was the neighborhood DJ and I was billed as a wonder kid." It was during the inception of rap music that the Brooklyn native ventured out of his neighborhood and landed his first job at a strip joint in Manhattan. This led to an additional club and private gigs and Unknown quickly began to develop quite a following.

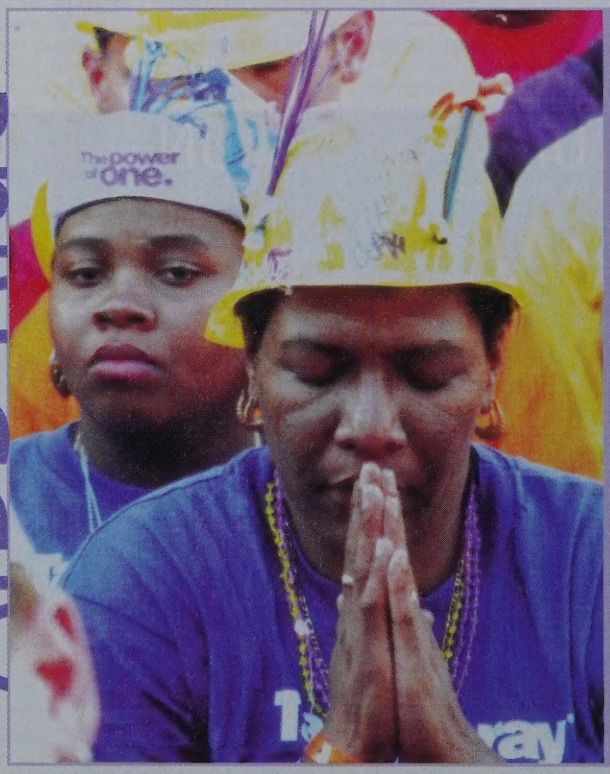
"Most mainstream DJ's start out in Gay Clubs but they will never tell you that. The real energy is in the gay clubs. If you are not good, the Kids will let you know," says Unknown. "I just make it a point not to forget my foundation."

Leather Fetish

Cannie Cox, (r), kicking it as MC for Leather Pride Night & Auction, New York City. Thelma Bowen, (top-l), author and a volunteer from the leather community present auction items for sale.



AIDS Ride



Members of Brother to Brother Sister to Sister United (BBSSU) , a team dedicated to raising AIDS awareness in the African American community, participated in the Boston-New York AIDS ride 5 Presented by Tanqueray. More than 2,500 riders raised more than $7 million for vital AIDS services. To learn more about BBSSU or Tanquerayís American AIDS Rides, call 800-825-1000 or visit www.aids ride.org.

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- Politics Is A Many Gendered Thing

Friday 11/12

- An Accessible Movement

Saturday 11/13

- Religion As An Agent Of Social Change

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- Our Movement's Second Century

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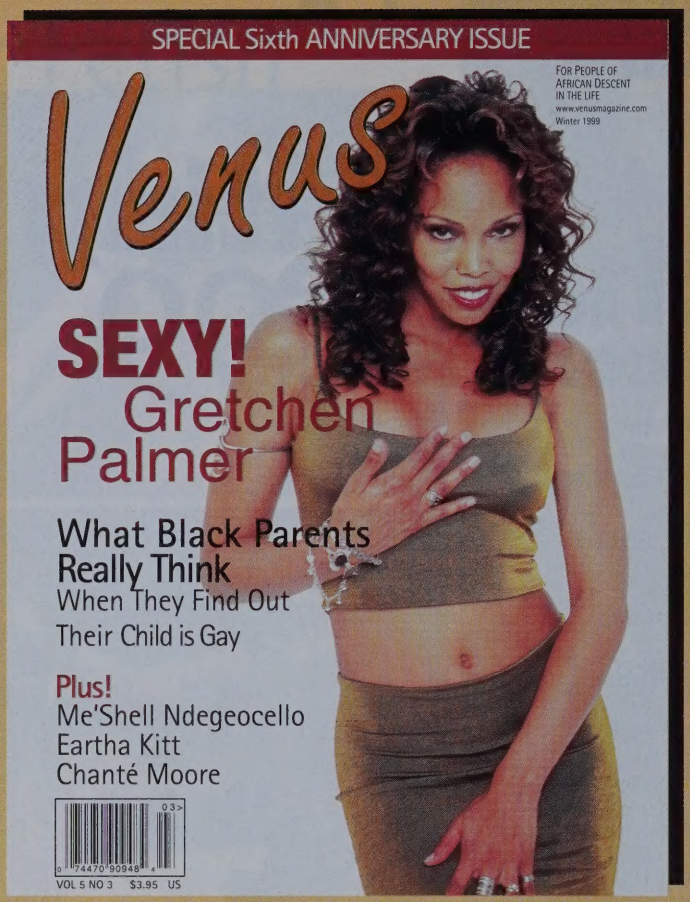

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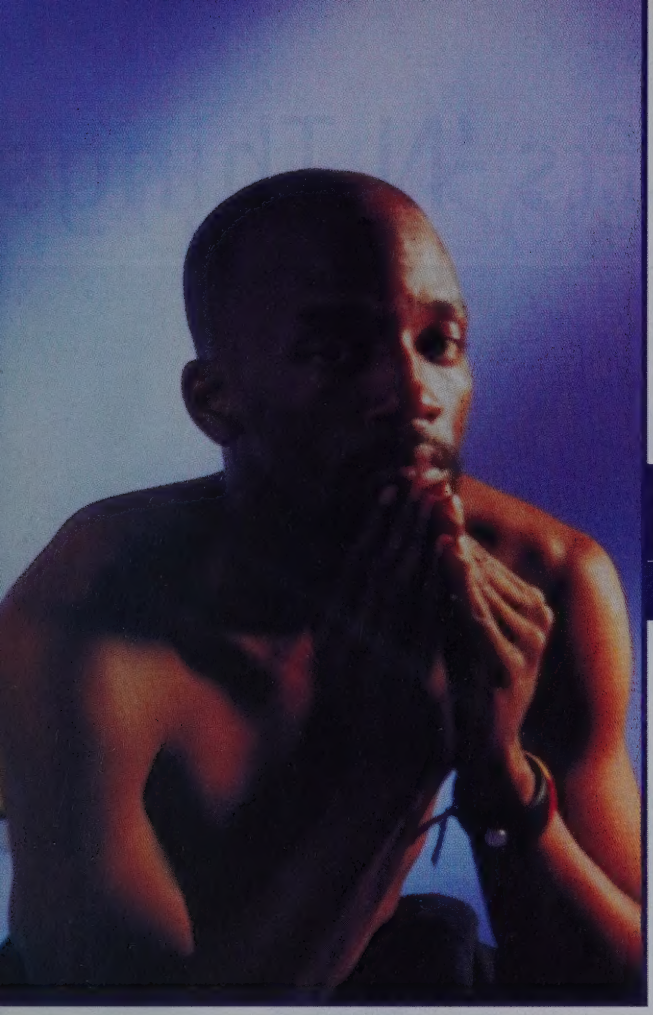

Essex Hemphill

April 16, 1957- November 4, 1995

"Everytime we kiss
we confirm the
new world coming."

Poet, performing artist, editor, designer and, most important, gay activist Essex Hemphill was born in Chicago, and raised in Washington, DC--a place "where pretension and bone structure/prevail as credentials/of status and beauty." The second oldest of five children, Hemphill, stereotypically it seems for many gay men, had problems with his father. "I don't understand our choices of angers, your domestic violence, my flaring temper," he wrote in his poem," The Father, Son and Holy Ghosts." In the poem, that problem was resolved through silence, "The deadliest weapon. We both use it," Hemphill concluded, "Precisely. Often." Of course, by publishing the poem Hemphill gave up his silence.

As a youth he had remained silent, constructing his life on "tablets, journals. Those became my confidants," he wrote. Hemphill confided to no one about his burgeoning homosexual desire. "I saw what they did to other kids they called 'faggot' at school," he explained.

Hemphill, however, needed something "to validate that my experience was real for me." So, what once went in tablets and journals he put into books, documentaries, and performed his poetry in gay clubs. In 1985, he gave us *Earth Life*, a volume of poetry, and the next year, *Conditions*. That same year, Hemphill received a fellowship for poetry from the National Endowment of the Arts. He contributed to *In the Life* (1986), Joseph Beam's collection of literature by black gay men. When Beam died in 1988, Hemphill took over his friend's unfinished work and produced *Brother to Brother* (1991), a companion anthology to *In the Life*. Hemphill's poetry played vital roles in two documentaries, Isaac Julien's *Looking for Langston* and Marlon Riggs' *Tongues Untied*.

Like George Hector in Mari Evans poem, *The Emancipation of George Hector*, who "didn't use to talk . . . but he does now," Hemphill was talking. His fierce dedication catapulted him to the forefront of a new literary movement. In the 1980s, poetry, short stories, magazines and even films by and about black gay men flourished. Hemphill was seminal to that movement. Hel challenged family, and the society, in general, insisting that gay black men had to be included in the mix.

"Everytime we kiss we confirm the new world coming."

Gifts 'N Things

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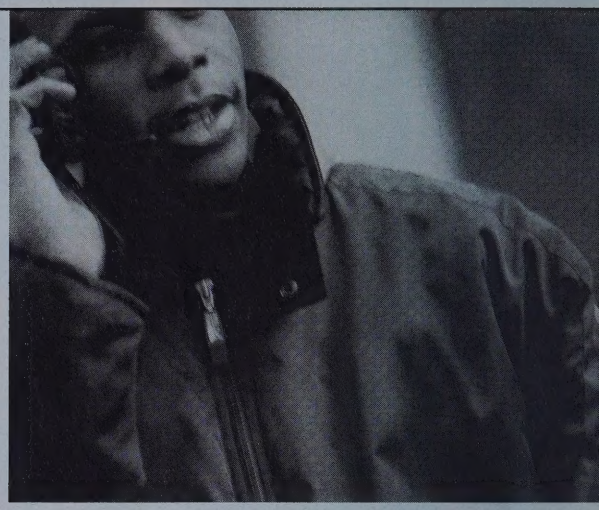
The first hand-held universal portable device capable of phone calls, recording and playing music from any format, scheduling, browsing the Internet, and global positioning systems. $199



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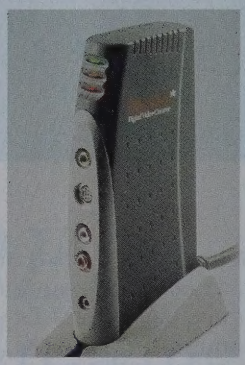

Dazzle Digital Video Creator

Internet edition's new design allows for quick connections, one-button web publishing and video e-mail as well as a video album to keep track of still photos, video and audio clips. $299.00

PocketMail by PocketScience

PocketMail can send or receive e-mail, or transmit fax or text messages using almost any phone by simply dialing a toll free number. $119

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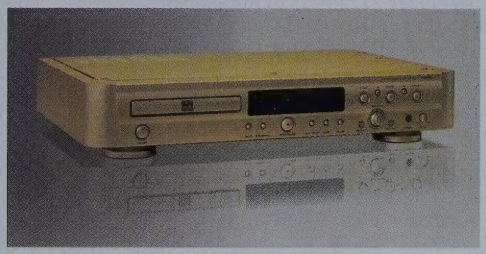
See our Gift Buying Guide on page 72 to learn where to buy these products.

Great Sound Great Looks



Marantz TX-DS575 A/V Receiver
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Millennium Calendar

New Years Eve Millennium Gala
Chicago's FUFU Entertainment presents a nostalgic event showcasing decorations representing each decade from 1910 - 1999. Live jazz, DJ, champagne, 3 open bars, 2 floors, Chef-attended full buffet, valet parking. December 31,1999, 9 pm - 3am, $100 per person. Call 708-604-3838.

RHAPSODY 2000
Rails Entertainment Group
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Call 708-802-1705 for Tickets

Millennium 200 New Years Eve Party
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Chicago, IL 10 pm - 2am
$75.00 per person
call 770-268-3132 for tickets
or email nallenii@aol.com

Celebration of Life New Years Eve Party
Whazzup! and Friends presents a New Years Eve Benefit for local AIDS organizations. Dancers, star performances, champagne and hor doevres. Dec. 31,1999 $50 per person Call 510-452-WHZP (9497).

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A Souljourn for the New Millennium
Gamma Beta Mu Fraternity presents "A Souljourn for the New Millennium" to Ghana and Senegal March 18-30, 2000, $2,725.00. Contact Harold Cook at Henderson Travel 800-327-2309, or 301-650-5700. Please reference Tour No. T-712. For additional info about Gamma Beta Mu contact Lee Jenkins at 606-253-4918. Everyone is welcome. Join us for a memorable trip!

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Bare Escentuals

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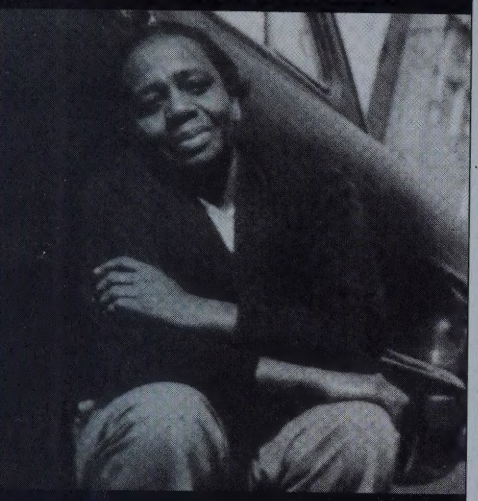

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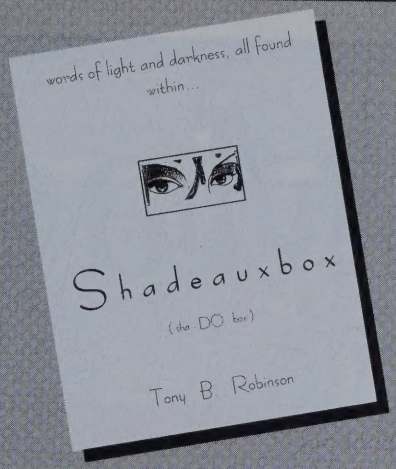

Shadeauxbox
Words of light and darkness are found within Shadeauxbox, a collection of poems and illustrations reflecting the thoughts of Black men and women in the life. By self-published writer & artist Tony B. Robinson. To purchase a copy of Shadeauxbox ($ 6.00) or find out more about it, please call Tony Robinson at 703-660-6724, or e-mail at shadeaux_w@hotmail.com.

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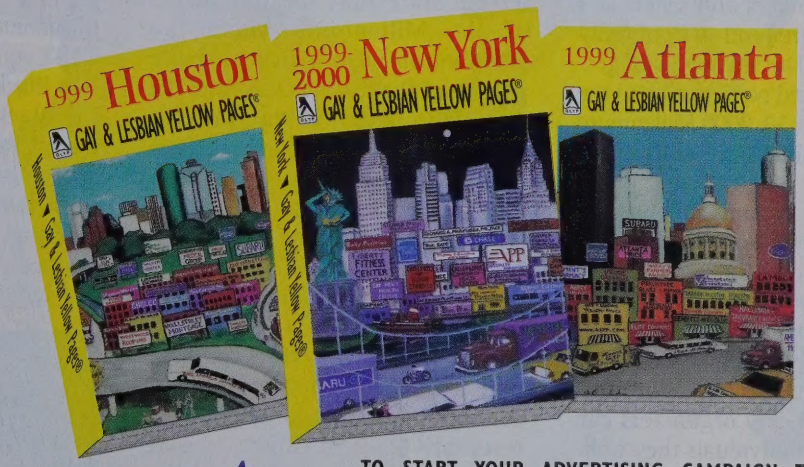

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Millennium Madness

"Just because the Millennium March on Washington for GLBT equality was not conceived by a Black person, does not mean that the Black GLBT community is excluded from the table or that the issues to be addressed do not/will not cut across ethnic and racial lines."

I feel compelled to write to my fellow brothers and sisters as I have before (and undoubtedly will again) on the merits of getting involved and participating in the upcoming April 30, 2000 Millennium March on Washington (MMOS).

I hope that as a community of people we can seize this opportunity. The opportunity exists for executive directors of national and local Black GLBT organizations to increase membership and raise much needed funds for the organizations which they represent. Black gay organizers can network with individuals they ordinarily would not have access to were it not for Washington serving as host for the influx of one million members of the GLBT community.

Just so it is perfectly clear, please let me state that the organizers of the Millennium March on Washington have indicated that a portion of the funds raised from the April 30th March will go to serve minority GLBT organizations. Here is an opportunity for our Black GLBT leaders throughout the country to have a voice and hold March organizers' feet to the fire--something which is hard to do effectively from the sidelines. In short, our leaders MUST lead. How unfortunate it would be, in my considerable opinion, if individuals and representatives of Black GLBT organizations did not do all they could in this instance to help better themselves, their people, and their communities.

Much has been said and written regarding the March. Just because the Millennium March on Washington for GLBT equality was not conceived of by a Black person, does not mean that the Black GLBT community is excluded from the table or that the issues to be addressed do not/will not cut across ethnic and racial lines. As always, I encourage everyone to roll up their sleeves, get involved andstop fo feiting power. stop fo feiting power.

by Everett E. Jennings,III

Valerie instructed her assistant, "If Natasha calls, give her the cell phone number, but if it's some woman named Cheryl...voicemail."
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